

The Glory of the Spirit in Gregory of Nyssa's *Adversus Macedonianos*

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The Glory of the Spirit in Gregory of Nyssa's *Adversus Macedonianos*

Commentary and Systematic-Theological Synthesis

By

Piet Hein Hupsch



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Antoinettae coniugi meae progeniebusque nostris dedicatum



Do you see the circle of glorification revolving from like to like?

ὁρᾷς τὴν ἐγκύκλιον τῆς δόξης διὰ τῶν ὁμοίων περιφορὰν;

∴

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Preface and Acknowledgments

In gratitude, I look back on the good years I spent as a teacher and a principal in secondary education in the Netherlands. For ten years in Amsterdam, at St. Ignatius' College (a Jesuit school), and then for a quarter of a century in Haarlem, at Mendel College (an Augustinian school), I was privileged, together with the pupils, their parents, my colleagues and the school board members, to experience the power of the good Spirit. The good Spirit of Jesus Christ who fosters solidarity within the school community and who kindles curiosity, among both pupils and teachers, desire for real knowledge, and joy at new discoveries. It was with good reason that at the beginning of each school year we asked in prayer for the coming of the Spirit, and concluded each year in gratitude for what the Spirit had given us in the form of new insight, of greater desire for real knowledge that keeps the mind cool and warms the heart, knowledge of all that is good and true and beautiful. Knowledge, therefore, that also leads to greater charity towards our fellow human beings and greater care for creation.

My study of Gregory of Nyssa's description of the Holy Spirit has given new colour and lustre to the power of the Spirit that I experienced in everyday life at school. It has also sharpened my focus on the importance of good teachers who create scope for the Spirit to point 'his' pupils to new horizons.

The monograph that lies before you—an adapted version of the Dutch-language doctoral dissertation defended at KU Leuven in 2018—is the result of a long period of classical and theological studies.

The degrees in Classics and Dutch that I obtained at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam were good preparation for my work at school and for the study of theology which I took up subsequently. I think with gratitude of my mentors, both professors of Greek: the late Gerrit de Vries, who taught me to read Plato, and Dick Schenkeveld, who enabled me to experience the force of Greek rhetoric. The fruits of their work are visible in this monograph.

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Finally, I give thanks to the Holy Spirit, who freely gave me the strength and the capacity to do this scholarly work. In expressing my gratitude to him, I give voice to my hope that the good Spirit of Christ may lead us all, both this generation and generations to come, to speechless wonder at God's unfathomable greatness.

Piet Hein Hupsch

Heemstede, The Netherlands,

9 March 2020, the feast of Saint Gregory of Nyssa

Abbreviations

1 Books of the Bible

Old Testament

Gen	Genesis
Ex	Exodus
Num	Numbers
Deut	Deuteronomy
1 Sam	The First Book of Samuel
1 Kings	The First Book of Kings
Ps	The Psalms
Prov	Proverbs
Eccles	Ecclesiastes
Song	Song of Songs
Wisd	Wisdom
Is	Isaiah
Dan	Daniel
Mic	Micah

New Testament

Mt	Matthew
Mk	Mark
Lk	Luke
Jn	John
Acts	Acts of the Apostles
Rom	Romans
1 Cor	1 Corinthians
2 Cor	2 Corinthians
Gal	Galatians
Eph	Ephesians
Fil	Philippians
2 Thess	2 Thessalonians
1 Tim	1 Timothy
2 Tim	2 Timothy
Tit	Titus
Heb	Hebrews

Jas	James
1 Pet	1 Peter
2 Pet	2 Peter

2 Abbreviations *Opera Gregorii Nysseni*

<i>Abl</i>	Ad Ablabium, Quod non sint tres dei
<i>An et res</i>	De anima et resurrectione
<i>Antirrh</i>	Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarium
<i>Ascens</i>	In ascensionem Christi oratio
<i>Bapt</i>	De iis qui baptismum differunt
<i>Bas</i>	In Basilium fratrem
<i>Beat</i>	De beatitudinibus
<i>Cant</i>	In Canticum Canticorum
<i>Deit Euag</i>	De deitate adversus Euagrium (<i>vulgo</i> In suam ordinationem)
<i>Diem lum</i>	In diem luminum (<i>vulgo</i> In baptismum Christi oratio)
<i>Eccl</i>	In Ecclesiasten homiliae
<i>Epist</i>	Epistulae
<i>Epist can</i>	Epistula canonica ad Letoium episcopum
<i>Eun</i>	Contra Eunomium libri, I et II (<i>vulgo</i> I et XII B)
<i>Eun</i>	Contra Eunomium libri, III (<i>vulgo</i> III–XII)
<i>Eust</i>	Ad Eustathium, De sancta Trinitate
<i>Flacill</i>	Oratio funebris in Flacillam imperatricem
<i>Graec</i>	Ad Graecos (Ex communibus notionibus)
<i>Hex</i>	Apologia in Hexaameron
<i>Infant</i>	De infantibus praemature abreptis
<i>Inscr</i>	In inscriptiones Psalmorum
<i>Inst</i>	De instituto christiano
<i>Maced</i>	Adversus Macedonianos, De Spiritu Sancto
<i>Macr</i>	Vita s. Macrinae
<i>Mart Ia</i>	In XL Martyres Ia
<i>Mart Ib</i>	In XL Martyres Ib
<i>Mart II</i>	In XL Martyres II
<i>Melet</i>	Oratio funebris in Meletium episcopum
<i>Mort</i>	De mortuis oratio
<i>Op hom</i>	De hominis opificio
<i>Or cat</i>	Oratio catechetica magna
<i>Or dom</i>	De oratione dominica

<i>Pent</i>	De Spiritu Sancto sive in Pentecosten
<i>Perf</i>	De perfectione
<i>Ref Eun</i>	Refutatio confessionis Eunomii (<i>vulgo</i> lib. II)
<i>Sanct Pasch</i>	In sanctum Pascha (<i>vulgo</i> In Christi resurrectionem oratio III)
<i>Simpl</i>	Ad Simplicium, De fide
<i>Steph I</i>	In sanctum Stephanum I
<i>Steph II</i>	In sanctum Stephanum II
<i>Thaum</i>	De vita Gregorii Thaumaturgi
<i>Theoph</i>	Ad Theophilum, Adversus Apollinaristas
<i>Trid spat</i>	De tridui inter mortem et resurrectionem domini nostri Iesu Christi spatio (<i>vulgo</i> In Christi resurrectionem oratio I)
<i>Tunc et ipse</i>	In illud: Tunc et ipse
<i>Virg</i>	De virginitate
<i>Vit Moys</i>	De vita Moysis

3 Bibliographical Abbreviations

BDGN	MATEO-SECO, LUCAS F. & GIULIO MASPERO (ed.), <i>The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa</i> (VCS 99), Leiden 2010
GNO	<i>Gregorii Nysseni Opera</i> (cur. WERNERUS JAEGER), Brill Leiden
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte, De Gruyter Berlin
LSJ	LIDDELL, H.G. & R. SCOTT & H. STUART JONES, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , Oxford 1968 (1940, repr. 1968)
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
LXX	Septuagint
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
VCS	Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae

4 Text-Critical Signs in the Greek Text of GNO

[]	editor has omitted
†	<i>locus corruptus</i>
< >	editor has added/conjectured

5 Other Abbreviations

*	translation adapted
[]	translator has added to clarify
ARG	Andrew Radde-Gallwitz (translator) comments
c.	circa
cf.	<i>confer</i>
col.	column
cur.	<i>curavit</i>
ed.	<i>edidit/ediderunt</i> /edited by
mss.	manuscripts
n.	note
p.	page/pages
repr.	reprinted
sc.	<i>scilicet</i>
s.v.	<i>sub voce</i>
tr.	translated by
transl.	translated
v.l.	<i>varius locus</i>

PART 1

Introduction



General Introduction

1 The Fourth Century

As the number of Christians increased, the fourth century witnessed a new need for greater communal clarification of the major questions about God's divinity, the person of Jesus Christ, his relationship with the Father, the role and meaning of his Spirit, and the way in which people can be initiated into the great mystery of God who has manifested himself to humankind. Throughout the fourth century, especially bishops grappled with these questions on the basis of passages from Scripture, the canon of which had in the meantime been fixed, and by trial and error they arrived at clearer formulations that attempted to do justice to these Scriptural passages. In doing so, they did not hesitate to make use, to varying degrees, of philosophical notions as these could be found in the existing philosophemes of Greek philosophers, and to modify these to suit their own needs.¹ Similarly, they used the rhetorical aids with which they were familiar. Greek philosophy more or less functioned as the handmaid of theology; the form in which the resulting theologies were shaped was largely determined by rhetoric, in which most bishop-theologians were well versed. The liturgical practices of catechesis on the sacraments, of celebrating the sacraments, and of the Christian feasts, the assistance—expressed in mystagogy—provided to people who were in the process of personally appropriating Christian doctrine, and the order of the Christian practice of life as it is based upon this all played an important role: the *lex orandi* was developing into the *lex credendi*.

After the death of his older brother Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, one of the three Cappadocian Fathers, assumed the task of developing further the theological concept of one God in three persons, being Father, Son, and Spirit, of defending this against opponents, and of ensuring that this concept be elevated to the status of definitive solution to the intellectual and also religious problem that had beset the Church for so long. In the context of this mission, Gregory afforded particular attention to the position, role, and activity of the Spirit

1 RICHARD HANSON, *The Achievement of Orthodoxy in the Fourth Century*, in: ROWAN WILLIAMS (ed.), *The Making of Orthodoxy. Essays in honour of Henry Chadwick*, Cambridge 1989, (142–156) 153, describes the genesis of orthodoxy in the fourth century and calls it “a process of trial and error”.

within the Trinity and in the lives of people, and to the consequences of his vision of the Spirit for the way human beings must believe in and adore God.

2 *Adversus Macedonianos*

In his work *Against the Macedonians, against the Spirit-Fighters* (*Adversus Macedonianos*), written and handed down in Greek, a treatise that has so far received relatively little scholarly attention and that dates from the period of the Council of Constantinople of 381, Gregory turned against those who denied the divinity of the Spirit. Gregory demonstrates in this work that the salvation that comes to humankind from God is mediated by the Holy Spirit as one of the three divine Persons. This Holy Spirit is worthy of adoration and glorification together with the Father and the Son. In this work, Gregory specifically addresses the fact that it is impossible for human beings to define God's nature. Human beings will have to limit themselves to describing God's actions, his ἐνέργειαι, expressions of his power. Thanks to the life-creating force of the Trinity that is manifested in baptism, human beings, through their belief in and worship of Father and Son and Holy Spirit, are drawn into the dynamic circle of divine glory, of which the Spirit is the personification.

The awareness has grown in contemporary Trinitarian theology that the importance of Trinitarian theology nowadays lies in the connection between soteriology and doxology. Gregory's theology, particularly in *Maced*, has contributed substantially to this connection, and it therefore merits further investigation. Moreover, analysis of this connection between soteriology and doxology in *Maced* can shed further light on Gregory's apophatic theology: God's infinite nature is reflected in the infinite, never-ending longing for God that human beings have, human beings who are God's image and likeness. Insight into Gregory's pneumatology is enhanced by the description that Gregory gives in *Maced* of the role of the Holy Spirit in connecting soteriology and doxology. In his Trinitarian theology, *relatio* is the ontological foundation; human beings are drawn into the *relatio* of the three divine persons thanks to the Spirit. An integral analysis of *Maced* can, finally, also contribute to greater insight into Gregory's independent view on the possibilities and limitations of theological speech and on the relation between theological speech and self-surrender in adoration of the Triune Godhead.

3 Gregory of Nyssa

3.1 *Gregory of Nyssa*

The Eastern Church Father Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335–after 394) was the bishop of Nyssa (372–after 394), and together with his elder brother Basil the Great and their friend Gregory of Nazianzus formed the company of the three Cappadocian Fathers. Gregory of Nyssa played a conspicuous role at the Second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople (381), which expanded the creed of Nicaea (325). Building on, and in dialogue with Greek philosophy, he constructed a Christian theology in which human perfection, due to God's eternal transcendence, consists in constant progress in virtue and love of God and of one's neighbour. Not immutability and immobility, as Plato had thought, but growth and dynamism are the essence according to Gregory. The love of God continues to grow deeper and deeper, without ever reaching a saturation point, even after death; this is perhaps Gregory's most surprising insight.

His awareness of God's infinite and incomprehensible nature makes of him one of the first and most significant apophatic theologians: we know mainly what God is not, not what He is. The Seventh Ecumenical Council (787 in Nicaea) afforded him the title of 'Father of Fathers'.

Gregory was born into an aristocratic, piously Christian family, at the earliest in 335, probably in Neocaesarea in Pontus.² He was taught briefly by his older brother Basil when he was c. 20 years old. Basil's teaching taught Gregory how important it is to be proficient in the art of rhetoric.

He acquired extensive knowledge of Greek philosophy (Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, Posidonius, Plotinus, Porphyry). In his works, written in Greek, he betrays the influence of the Second Sophistic,³ and also wide knowledge of medicine.

2 There is as yet no full biography of Gregory. A first outline can be found in PIERRE MARAVAL, *Biography*, in: *BDGN* (2010) 103–115, and JOHN ANTHONY MCGUCKIN, *St Gregory of Nyssa: Bishop, Philosopher, Exegete, Theologian*, in: ANNA MARMODORO & NEIL B. MCLYNN (ed.), *Exploring Gregory of Nyssa—Philosophical, Theological, and Historical Studies*, Oxford 2018, 7–28. Very few of Gregory's letters are extant. On the basis of the few letters that we have, and a number of letters to him, ANNA M. SILVAS, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters. Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (VCS 83), Leiden 2007, attempted to sketch his life in her translation of and commentary on these letters. This, as well as Maraval's entry, have helped me in writing this opening section on Gregory's life. MATTHIEU CASSIN, *Bulletin de patrologie*, in: *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 100 (2016) 459–516, p. 478, has sounded a note of caution in respect of Silvas's reconstruction, of which he has said that it is at least "contestable et comble trop volontiers les lacunes de l'histoire". He prefers Pierre Maraval's contributions to *BDGN: Biography*, in: *BDGN* (2010) 103–115; *Chronology of Works*, in: *BDGN* (2010) 153–169.

3 Recent research has preferred to speak, in respect of Christian bishops who use the (epi-

At the insistence of Basil, who had in the meantime become bishop of Caesarea, Gregory in late 371 accepted ordination to the priesthood and the episcopate, becoming bishop of Nyssa, the current town of Nevşehir, capital of the eponymous province in Turkish Cappadocia, three days' travel west of Caesarea.

After Basil's death in the autumn of 378,⁴ Gregory asserted himself as his successor who would continue the ecclesiastical and theological work of his deceased brother. His great dogmatic work *Against Eunomius* (*Eun*), directed against Eunomius of Cyzicus, who refused to place the Son and the Spirit on the same level as the unborn Father, is testimony to this. He mediated in ecclesiastical and doctrinal conflicts and actively participated in the practice of theology, by writing dogmatic and spiritual works, preaching sermons, and writing letters. In the spring of 379, he took part in the Council of Antioch, which managed, through Gregory's mediation, to solve disputes among the adherents of the Nicene creed, a sign of things to come for Gregory during and after the Council of Constantinople in 381.⁵

During the Councils of Constantinople in 381 and 383, he played an important role in defending the full divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit.⁶ It was in the context of this council that he wrote *Adversus Macedonianos*, *De Spiritu*

deictic) rhetoric of the Second Sophistic, of the period of the Third Sophistic, to highlight that the phase of the Christian application of the Second Sophistic is a new development called the Third Sophistic. See EUGENIO AMATO & A. RODUIT & M. STEINRÜCK (ed.), *Approches de la Troisième Sophistique. Hommages à Jacques Schamp*, Brussels 2006. LIEVE VAN HOOFF, Greek Rhetoric and the later Roman empire. The Bubble of the "Third Sophistic", in: *Antiquité Tardive—Revue Internationale d'Histoire et d'Archéologie (Ive–VIIe siècle)* 18 (2010) 211–224, has rightly argued for a return to the term 'Second Sophistic', to recognise the continuity of the sophistic movement in late Antiquity, which is marked by transformation and adaptation rather than rupture and decline.

4 ANNA M. SILVAS, *Gregory of Nyssa. The Letters*, 32–39, gives an extensive account of the scholarly debate between T.D. Barnes and J.R. Pouchet on the dating of Macrina's death and of Basil's death. She ultimately settles on 19 July 379 as Macrina's date of death and late September 378 as Basil's. Traditionally, 1 January 379 was believed to be his date of death.

5 MARK DELCOGLIANO, *Basil of Caesarea's Anti-Eunomian Theory of Names. Christian Theology and Late-Antique Philosophy in the Fourth Century Trinitarian Controversy* (VCS 103), Leiden 2010, p. 42: "Gregory appears to have been confirmed or encouraged as his brother's heir in the defence of doctrine, and may have been designated a special referee for church order, a role much more formally sanctioned and extended two years later in Constantinople."

6 A recent overview of the dating of Gregory's works that were possibly written between 380 and 385 can be found in MATTHIEU CASSIN, *Contre Eunome III: une introduction*, in: JOHAN LEEMANS & MATTHIEU CASSIN (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III, Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Leuven, 14–17 September 2010* (VCS 124), Leiden 2014, 3–33, pp. 6–9.

Sancto (*Maced*). In the period between the councils of 381 and 383, he was sent on a mission to mediate in ecclesiastical conflicts in the province of Arabia and in Jerusalem, another indication of his influence, which reached far beyond the confines of his diocese. During the 386–394 period he wrote his most important Trinitarian treatise *Ad Ablabium, Quod non sint tres dei* (*Abl*), a serene synthesis of his Trinitarian views. In the 380s, Gregory turned against yet another threat to orthodoxy: Apollinarianism, Monophysitism *avant la lettre*, which contended that the divine Word had taken on Christ's human flesh and that the divine Word had taken the place of Christ's human *nous*. This meant that the incarnation of the Word had to be interpreted in its narrowest sense. This theological position had already been rejected by the Council of Constantinople in 381, but Gregory felt compelled to refute its positions in writing.⁷

Towards the end of the 380s, Gregory to a certain extent withdrew from the theological and ecclesiastical fray and turned instead to developing his mystical theology on a Scriptural basis. He wrote a commentary on the Song of Songs (*In Canticum Canticorum, Cant*), which, together with his Life of Moses (*De vita Moysis, Vit Moys*), forms the spiritual highpoint of his writings.

In 394, he attended the Synod of Constantinople to mark the dedication of that city's church of the Apostles, and to settle a dispute about the see of Bostra in Arabia. Gregory's name appears in a place of honour on the list of participants, between Helladius, the metropolitan of Caesarea, and Amphilochius, the metropolitan of Iconium.⁸ It is the last we hear of Gregory; we do not know in what year he died.

3.2 *Human Language and God's Essence and Way of Being*

Gregory built his Christian philosophy and theology on the foundation of a linguistic philosophy which he designed himself and which is set out in his

7 CHRISTOPHER A. BEELEY, *The Unity of Christ. Continuity and Conflict in Patristic Tradition*, New Haven 2012, 199–221, offers a fine survey of Gregory's Antiochene-inspired Christology on the basis of *Eun III*, *Antirrh* and *Theoph*. The conference proceedings in ELIAS A. MOUTSOULAS (ed.), *Jesus Christ in St. Gregory of Nyssa's Theology. Minutes of the Ninth International Conference of St. Gregory of Nyssa—Athens, 7–12 September 2000*, Athens 2005, provide a series of articles on Gregory's Christology. BRIAN DALEY SJ, *God Visible. Patristic Christology Reconsidered*, Oxford 2018, 138–149, portrays Gregory's Christology as his attempt to view the incarnation of the Word ("a kind of unparalleled divine rhetoric addressed to created history", p. 148) as the beginning of the transformation of all of humankind.

8 A Greek excerpt of the acts of this synod appears in the *Syntagma XIV Titulorum* edited by Theodorus Balsamon, a canonist in Constantinople, twelfth century. Cf. HEINZ OHME, Sources of the Greek Canon Law to the Quinisext Council (691/2): Councils and Church Fathers, in: WILFRIED HARTMANN & KENNETH PENNINGTON (ed.), *History of Byzantine and Eastern Canon Law to 1500*, Washington 2012, 24–114, pp. 75–77.

polemical work against Eunomius of Cyzicus, who denied the full divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and who called only the Father God in the strict sense of the word. Gregory presents himself as a man of the Enlightenment in the late antique world; in evocative language, he sings the praises of the human intellect and its results. At the same time, Gregory points to the limitations of human thought: the human intellect cannot comprehend the essence of all that is and of God, but can grasp only aspects of this/of Him. Human beings use their God-given reason to give a name to all things. Being precedes being given a name. Names are part of the creation, invented by people who need names to be able to speak of the things that confront them. Gregory reflects systematically on religious language. Everything that is said in language about God is ambiguous, whether it is an affirmation or a negation. Whenever God speaks to human beings, as He does in Scripture, this is testimony to God's love for humankind, which extends to the point that He descends to the human level, and not proof of his need for language. It is out of love for human beings that He utters human words whenever He appears:

like a compassionate mother joining in the baby-talk with the inarticulate whimperings of her babies, passes on to the human race that which they are capable of receiving.⁹

God communicates the divine truth in human terms, so that human beings can understand his teaching. This is how anthropomorphisms in the Bible must be interpreted. Allegorical exegesis pierces the sensory, linguistic veil of Scripture, and speaks spiritually about the spiritual things that are concealed in Scripture. Thus Gregory is able to speak about the actions of the divine persons and their effects as these appear in time. But words cannot grasp the essence of God. Human beings are not even capable of knowing the essence of the created realities. The human mind can touch the divine nature, but will never be able to comprehend it. The highest knowledge is to know the limitlessness and inaccessibility of the divine nature. Our discursive thought and our discursive language are not able to think or articulate the undifferentiated essence of God. God's essence escapes all definitions invented by human reason. We are like infants who think they can catch a sunbeam in their little hands. We have learned to honour in silence that which transcends thought and speech. The human mind acquires clear knowledge: that God exists, but that that which

⁹ *Eun* II GNO I. 348,24–28: οἷόν τις μήτηρ εὐσπλαγχνος τοῖς ἀσήμεσι τῶν νηπίων κνυζήμασι συνδιαψελλιζομένη τοῦτο νέμει τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ φύσει ὃ λαβεῖν δυνατῶς ἔχει (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

all human minds seek, i.e. knowledge of God, transcends all knowledge. Only faith mediates between the subject and the object of the enquiry, and permits the probing mind to approach the incomprehensible nature. This faith, purified of every notion, of every concept and image of God, ensures that human beings can constantly, even eternally, strive further towards God's glory. In this faith, human beings can enter the divine darkness that is a darkness of light. Faith mediates knowledge of a discursive kind to the human mind: that God is greater than any sign through which He can be known. Faith brings into human existence the paradox of seeing the Invisible, and unites the human mind and God. Nevertheless, human words can utter *the way* in which the divine persons are, even within the immanence of the Trinity.¹⁰ Within God's single nature, there are three ways of being. Time and eternity are not fully separated. This is where the positive dimension of apophatic language becomes evident, a language that finds its culminating point in Christological language. In God's salvific actions, which are manifested in time and become tangible in the incarnation of the Son in Christ, time and eternity, the one and the many, meet. God's salvific actions are the foundation for utterances about the immanent Trinity.¹¹

The Creator and creation are irrevocably separated from each other by the διάστημα, the gap, the space between Creator and creatures,¹² but human beings are in the frontier zone, they cross borders, μεθόριοι, the border between the sensory and the intelligible world, because they are made in the image of God and are possessed of freedom to achieve ever greater perfection.¹³

10 I will use the concepts of immanence and immanent in the sense in which Karl Rahner uses them in his famous *Grundaxiom: Die ökonomische Trinität ist die immanente Trinität und umgekehrt*, zie KARL RAHNER, Der Dreifaltige Gott als transzendenter Urgrund der Heilsgeschichte, in: J. FEINER & M. LÖHRER (ed.), *Mysterium Salutis. Grundriß heilsgeschichtlicher Dogmatik*, Einsiedeln 1965–1981, Band 2 (1967) 318–401, pp. 318–329. God in se as opposed to God *ad extra*.

11 SCOT DOUGLASS, *Theology of the Gap. Cappadocian Language Theory and the Trinitarian Controversy*, New York 2005, *passim*.

12 The διάστημα/διάστασις characterises creation, is creation itself even (*Eccl VII GNO V. 412,14: τὸ δὲ διάστημα οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ κτίσις ἐστίν*). T. PAUL VERGHESE, Διάστημα and διάστασις in Gregory of Nyssa. Introduction to a Concept and the Posing of a Problem, in: HEINRICH DÖRRIE & MARGARETE ALTENBURGER & UTA SCHRAM (ed.), *Gregor von Nyssa und die Philosophie. Zweites Internationales Kolloquium über Gregor von Nyssa, Freckenhorst bei Münster, 18.–23. September 1972*, Leiden 1976, 243–258.

13 JEAN DANIELOU, *L'être et le temps chez Grégoire de Nysse*, Leiden 1970, 116–132 (= *Chapitre VI Frontière*).

4 The *Status Quaestionis* of the Work: The Issues

There is as yet no full commentary on this work on the basis of an integral study of Gregory's theological insights and of the rhetorical and stylistic devices he uses in this work. There are a number of partial studies, and a recent German translation that remains very close to the source text, by Volker Henning Drecoll and published by Brill, Leiden, in 2011 in the Proceedings of the eleventh international colloquium in Tübingen, entitled *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism*.¹⁴ Andrew Radde-Gallwitz has recently published a clear English translation in *The Cambridge Edition of Early Christian Writings*.¹⁵ This translation has been included in this volume of the *Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae* with the permission of the translator and his publisher.

Werner Jaeger's posthumously published book *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre vom Heiligen Geist. Aus dem Nachlass herausgegeben von H. Dörries*, Leiden 1966, chapter 11 (*Gregors Schrift über den Heiligen Geist. Gegen die Makedonianer, die wider den Geist streiten*) stands at the origins of research of *Maced*. Martin Parmentier made ample use of *Maced* in his description of Gregory's doctrine of the Spirit in his Oxford dissertation in 1973.¹⁶ Recent partial studies can be found in Andrew Radde-Gallwitz, *Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrinal Works. A Literary Study*, Oxford 2018, 61–75, where he demonstrates the importance of *Maced* for Gregory's theology of the incarnate economy of Christ, and in Giulio Maspero, *The Fire, The Kingdom and the Glory*, in: VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism, Proceedings of the 11th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Tübingen, 17–20 September 2008*, (VCS 106), Leiden 2011, 229–276. In this article, Maspero performs a diachronic analysis of *Maced*, both with regard to the development of pneumatology in the fourth century (especially the relationship between Basil's vision and Gregory's development of this) and

14 IGOR POCHOSHJEW, *Gregory of Nyssa, De Beatitudinibus IV, Ad Ablabium and Adversus Macedonianos. English and German Translations and Studies* (Patrologia xx), Frankfurt 2008, 73 ff., has published a similar German translation (p. 69: "ein Medium ..., das den Zugang zum griechischen Originaltext erleichtern soll").

15 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ (tr.), *Gregory of Nyssa, On the Holy Spirit against the Macedonian Spirit-Fighters*, in: *The Cambridge Edition of Early Christian Writings. vol. 1, God, part II Creeds and Controversies (300–400)*, Cambridge 2017, 270–293, published online in October 2017: <https://doi-org.proxy.library.uu.nl/10.1017/9781107449596.020>, accessed 24 November 2017.

16 MARTIN PARMENTIER, *St. Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (PhD Oxford University), Oxford 1973.

to the maturing of Gregory's own thinking on the Spirit. Maspero has pointed to Gregory's theology of adoration as the key to his vision of theology. Miguel Brugarolas Brufau has done important work as a follow-up of Maspero's partial study in his book *El Espíritu Santo: De la divinidad a la procesión. El desarrollo pneumatológico en los escritos dogmáticos de los tres grandes capadocios*, where he describes the importance of *Maced* for the development of pneumatology in his chapter *San Gregorio di Nisa: El Adversus Macedonianos Pneumatomachos, De Spiritu Sancto*.¹⁷ In the preface to this book, Lucas F. Mateo-Seco has summarised Brugarolas's view on *Maced* as follows:

Miguel Brugarolas estima este pequeño tratado como una síntesis del pensamiento pneumatológico de Gregorio. Según esto, desde este tratado se obtiene la mejor perspectiva sobre toda la doctrina nicensa en torno al Espíritu Santo.¹⁸

Partial studies of aspects of this work have suggested that it is not a clearly structured text, but a collection of the most important arguments against the Macedonians. In Volker Henning Drecoll's entry on *Adversus Macedonianos* in *The Brill Dictionary of Gregory of Nyssa*, he observes:

There is not a clearly structured organization, but an assembly of the more important arguments against the Macedonians.¹⁹

Miguel Brugarolas has followed Drecoll and speaks of an "agrupación de argumentos en defensa del Espíritu Santo contra las tesis de los macedonios". The work offers "un compendio en el que reúne los argumentos esenciales para la defensa de la fe en el Espíritu Santo".²⁰ Brugarolas has identified a line of enquiry that could be followed to investigate what characteristics Gregory attributes to the Spirit with regard to his participation in God's one work of salvation, both in *Eun* and in the smaller Trinitarian treatises such as *Maced*.²¹

17 MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS BRUFAU, *El Espíritu Santo: De la divinidad a la procesión. El desarrollo pneumatológico en los escritos dogmáticos de los tres grandes capadocios*, Pamplona 2012, 187–250.

18 MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS BRUFAU, *El Espíritu Santo*, 19.

19 VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL, *MACED. Adversus Macedonianos, De spiritu sancto*, in: *BDGN* (2010) 466–468, p. 466.

20 MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS BRUFAU, *El Espíritu Santo*, 189.

21 MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS, The Philanthropic Economy of the Holy Spirit. Notes on *Contra Eunomium* III 6,32, in: JOHAN LEEMANS & MATTHIEU CASSIN (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa:*

In fact, however, the assumption that *Maced* is not clearly structured but is a collection of important arguments against the Macedonians is improbable. Apart from the *a priori*—which it would not be difficult to defend—that Gregory's writings are normally clearly structured, the subject discussed in *Maced* surely gives credence to the contrary opposite assumption that a careful structure for this work is likely. Gregory explains his view on the position of the Holy Spirit in the creed and in the doxology that is so intimately connected with it. On the basis of this view on the Holy Spirit, he develops his Trinitarian theology of the adoration of the Triune Godhead. The crucial importance that Gregory affords to acknowledgement of the divinity of the Spirit, a neuralgic point in the debates during the Council of Constantinople in 381, makes the hypothesis that Gregory must have structured this work carefully and made good use of his literary, rhetorical and stylistic abilities more probable at first sight than the assumption that it is an unclearly structured collection of arguments against the Macedonians. Too much was at stake for Gregory to be casual about it. My integral study of this work has uncovered Gregory's carefully considered structure for this work, and demonstrates the important connection that exists between the various theological elements and the rhetorical and stylistic devices employed.

There is no doubt among scholars that Gregory is the author of *Maced*, even though his name is not mentioned in either of the two codices in which the work has been handed down. Werner Jaeger's authoritative voice has played a key role in this.²² There is more about the attribution of *Maced* to Gregory in the relevant chapter (chapter 1, section 8).

Scholars disagree about the precise dating of the work, especially about whether *Maced* was written before, during, or after the Council of Constantinople in 381. All agree, however, that *Maced* is undeniably linked to this council. More about this topic can be found in the chapter on the dating of *Maced* (chapter 1, section 9).

The question what significance this work had for the preparation for and/or the influence of this council is linked to the previous issue. At the same time it must be asked whether conclusions can be drawn from this work on whether

Contra Eunomium 111, *Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Leuven, 14–17 September 2010* (VCS 124), Leiden 2014, 500–511, p. 510.

22 WERNER JAEGER, *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre*, 27. In this book, Jaeger portrays Gregory of Nyssa as the proclaimer and defender of the article on the Holy Spirit in the extended form of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, and he shows how this vision of the Spirit fits into the wider context of Gregory's thought. Jaeger has not the slightest doubt that Gregory is the author.

Gregory played a decisive role in this council's definition of the Holy Spirit, and whether he was the author of the addition to the *Nicenum* that resulted in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. Another point of debate is whether Gregory was successful in providing a coherent view of the position of the Spirit and thus of the Trinity in this work, whether his reflections rise above the level of casual arguments against the Pneumatomachi, and if so, whether they contributed to the pneumatology of the Cappadocian Fathers. A related question is to what extent Gregory followed his older brother Basil in the latter's previously published *De Spiritu Sancto* (375).²³

A lot of research has focused on the rhetorical devices that Gregory uses in his sermons. But the use of rhetorical and stylistic devices in theological treatises like *Maced* merits greater attention: how do they contribute to his theological arguments?

Finally, insufficient attention has been given to the relationship that Gregory describes in this work between theology as speaking about God, and theo-logia as speaking by God. In *Maced*, Gregory moves from theological thinking and speaking to the worship of the Triune Godhead.

An enduring point of caution is the risk that modern researchers, with their contemporary systematic theological presuppositions, run of asking more of Gregory's way of doing theology than it can offer.

5 Plan

5.1 Question

What theological insights and what rhetorical and stylistic devices does Gregory use in this work? Is this work a clearly structured whole, and is Gregory successful in coherently constructing a Trinitarian theology of the adoration of the Triune Godhead?

23 I will not deal extensively here with the relation between Basil's work *De Spiritu Sancto* and Gregory's *Maced*. I will only enquire tangentially into the correctness of Volker Henning Drecoll's contention in his entry on MACED, in *BDGN* (2010) 466: "This theological profile (of the Pneumatomachi in *Maced*) corresponds exactly to what we find on the Pneumatomachians in Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto*. Gregory's own arguments also often refer to his brother's work." On p. 468: "This writing shows how Gregory after the death of his brother, continued to support both his theology and his aspirations."

5.2 *Plan of Chapters*

Introduction, translation, commentary, and systematic theological synthesis together offer a synthetic view of this work. The introduction and the commentary shed light on its coherence and show the important connection that exists between the various theological elements and the rhetorical and stylistic devices used. This analysis will result in a synthetic description of Gregory's vision, as it is contained in this work, of the Spirit as one of the divine persons and of his essential role in creation and redemption, followed by a description of the Trinitarian theology of the adoration of the Triune Godhead that Gregory develops in *Maced* on the basis of his pneumatology.

The integral commentary on this work offered in this book is one modest fruit of the extensive preparatory work that generations of scholars of Gregory have together accomplished.²⁴

The current study is divided into three main parts. These three parts together are made up of six chapters.

The introductory section of Part 1 has given a brief description of Gregory's life and work and of his main insights. These insights can help to place the specific features of *Maced* that will come to light later in the wider context of Gregory's Christian philosophy and theology. The chapter on the *status quaestionis* outlines the state of research on this work and addresses the most important issues that continue to be raised in contemporary secondary literature,²⁵ particularly concerning the structure of the work. The context of Gregory's *Maced* will be described: the rise of the Pneumatomachi in the fourth century, the struggle that Basil and, in his footsteps, Gregory, mounted against them, the significance of the Council of Constantinople in 381, and the role that the Emperor Theodosius I played in this. The remainder of Part 1 discusses the textual tradition and the attribution to Gregory, and makes an attempt to date the work on the basis of Gregory's important role in the doctrinal discussions

24 Examples of a comparable approach are: HUBERTUS R. DROBNER, *Gregor von Nyssa. Die Drei Tage zwischen Tod und Auferstehung unseres Herrn Jesus Christus, eingeleitet, übersetzt und kommentiert* (Philosophia Patrum V), Leiden 1982; HENRIETTE M. MEISSNER, *Rhetorik und Theologie. Der Dialog Gregors von Nyssa De Anima et Resurrectione* (Patrologia 1), Frankfurt 1991.

25 Matthieu Cassin's (Paris, CNRS, Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, section grecque) work is of seminal importance for Gregory's bibliography. Since 2007, he has been keeping a record of all publications about Gregory (textual editions, translations, monographs, volumes, journal articles, and reviews) on the internet at: https://www.zotero.org/groups/176620/gregory_of_nyssa/items.

around and during the Council of Constantinople in 381. The content of *Maced* and the rhetorical devices it contains, such as that of the counteraccusation, will be discussed in the chapter that asks for what audience Gregory was writing and to what rhetorical genre this work must be counted. Part 1 concludes with an analysis of the composition of *Maced* and the description of the core argument of the work.

In the commentary, I will examine each part of the text/chapter or coherent combination of chapters to identify the core concepts of the work, and to see what theological elements and rhetorical and stylistic means Gregory introduces, how these core concepts affect the subordinate parts, and how these subordinate parts in their turn support the core concepts. In this endeavour I will have recourse to other works attributed to Gregory whenever they can shed light on it, for instance *Or cat* and the sermon *Diem lum* on the relation between his Trinitarian theology and his view of baptism; *Eun* and *Ref Eun* for his pneumatology and his apophatic theology; *Eust*, *Epist xxiv* (to Heracleianus) and *Steph I* because they discuss a similar subject to *Maced*; *Cant* for his theology of glory. This will help to found and maintain a clear view of the whole of *Maced*.

The chapter-by-chapter commentary will address such topics as Gregory's use of Scripture, his anthropology, his view of creation, and the way in which form (rhetoric, style) supports content. The commentary will be structured as follows: Greek text, English translation, brief paraphrase, subquestions, answers to these subquestions, sometimes concluded by an explicit summary of the results of this detailed study. In the answers to the subquestions I will also respond to the arguments and views in secondary literature. I will not attempt to give an exhaustive treatment of all secondary literature on *Maced*, but will address only those contributions that can aid better understanding of *Maced*. I will also discuss secondary literature that demands contradiction or the modification of viewpoints.

The form I have chosen for the text commentary is that of responses to subquestions. I will not attempt a word-for-word commentary, but will try to bring to light the coherence between the theological *ductus* of the text and its literary and rhetorical devices. The structure of responses to subquestions that I have formulated in respect of the text makes it possible on the one hand to explore the theological *ductus*, and on the other to investigate the literary and rhetorical devices in an interrogative way, while the responses will highlight the coherence between Gregory's theology and his rhetoric. As the series of questions and answers progresses, the particular coherence of this work will slowly but surely become visible. This series of questions and answers also enhances communication between the author of the work and his readers, and mirrors

the way in which, for instance, Philo read texts and conducted textual exegesis in his commentary on Genesis and Exodus (in the form of *erotapokrisis*).²⁶

Given the structure of the commentary, which aims to discover the theological *ductus* of the work and the rhetorical structure that Gregory chose for it, I will not address every conceivable specific subject that would normally be treated in a word-by-word commentary. This means there may well be interesting themes or questions to which the text gives rise but that must needs remain outside the scope of my research, given the orientation of my commentary. In any case I will attend to the rhetorical and stylistic means that Gregory uses to shape his content. His use of metaphors, particularly, will be subject to specific scrutiny.

The concluding chapters that follow the commentary will discuss the work's core concepts, organised according to the principles of systematic theology. Gregory's vision of the Spirit as the spirit of the Father's power will be the guiding principle in determining this systematic theological order.

This will be followed by a description of the Trinitarian theology of adoration which Gregory develops in this work. In the last chapter, I will explore Gregory's vision of speaking by God, which sets in motion the transition from theological thought and discourse to the worship of the Triune Godhead. In this chapter, I will distinguish between theology as speaking about God, doxology as speaking to God, and theo-logia as speaking by God, who draws human beings into the circle of divine glorification.

In the conclusion, I will offer an outline of the contribution that *Maced* can make to broadening our perspective on the role of the Spirit in the Triune Godhead's work of salvation, to promoting a contemporary Christology in a Trinitarian perspective, and to furthering the nexus between soteriology and doxology within a contemporary Trinitarian theology.

26 GREGORY E. STERLING, *When the Beginning is the End: The Place of Genesis in the Commentaries of Philo*, in: CRAIG A. EVANS & JOEL N. LOHR & DAVID L. PETERSEN (ed.), *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation* (Vetus Testamentum Supplements 152), Leiden 2012, 427–446, pp. 430–431: “Philo’s *modus operandi* was to work sequentially through the biblical text posing questions and then providing answers. The questions typically begin with ‘why’ or ‘what is’ followed by a citation from the biblical text ... As a work the *Questions and Answers* belongs to the zetematic literary tradition or what medieval scribes called *erotapokriseis*—a compound word from ‘question’ (ἐρώτησις) and ‘answer’ (ἀποκρίσις). The tradition began with Aristotle’s *Homeric Problems* and became commonplace in philosophical circles in the Hellenistic and Roman worlds, e.g. Plutarch’s *Platonic Questions*.” See also PIETER W. VAN DER HORST, *Philo and the Rabbis on Genesis: Similar Questions, Different Answers*, in: ANNELIE VOLGERS and CLAUDIO ZAMAGNI (ed.), *Erotapokriseis: Early Christian Question-and-Answer Literature in Context* (Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Literature 37), Leuven 2004, 55–70.

6 Gregory's *Adversus Macedonianos* and Its Context

6.1 *The Work Adversus Macedonianos*

In his work *Adversus Macedonianos* (381), Gregory responds to attacks by opponents who accuse him of impiety (ἀσεβεια), because he places the Spirit on the same level as the Father and the Spirit, and attributes to the Spirit the fullness of the divine nature that Father and Son have. In response to these accusations of impiety, Gregory utters a counteraccusation: they who deny the Spirit's divine nature themselves commit impiety, not only against the Spirit, but also against the Son and the Father. In this work, Gregory demonstrates the unity in differentiation of the three divine persons who glorify each other. It is into this circle of glorification that human beings are drawn who are baptised in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and who acknowledge the Father as the source of the power, the Son as the power, and the Spirit as the spirit of the power. Taken up into this circle of glorification, human beings acknowledge the *homotimia*, the Holy Spirit's equal glory. Gregory then concludes the work with a theology of the adoration of the Triune Godhead.

6.2 *The Context of Adversus Macedonianos*

Gregory wrote *Maced* in the context of the Council of Constantinople in 381. The position of the Holy Spirit was a bone of contention between the council fathers at this council.

The Council of Nicaea in 325 had extensively treated of the relationship between the Father and the Son, and was followed by a dispute between Eunomius and Basil. After the latter's death in the autumn of 378, Gregory of Nyssa assumed his brother's place in this conflict. Over the course of the fourth century, a separate but connected and acute debate arose about the divinity of the Holy Spirit. In his letters to Bishop Serapion of Thmuis during the years 357–360,²⁷ Athanasius of Alexandria laid the foundations for recognition of the full divinity of the Spirit, upon which his followers, including Didymus the Blind in his *De Spiritu Sancto*, handed down to us in a Latin translation by Jerome, and Basil in his *De Spiritu Sancto*, could build their impassioned arguments for the divinity of the Spirit, as they attempted to reach further clarity on the doctrine of the Triune Godhead.²⁸ Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa in their

27 XAVIER MORALES, *La théologie trinitaire d'Athanase d'Alexandrie* (Études augustinnes, série Antiquité 180), Paris 2006, 564.

28 For Athanasius, see MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God. The Exegesis of 1 & 2 Corinthians in the Pneumatomachian Controversy of the Fourth Century* (VCS 27), Leiden 1994, 59–103; for Basil, *ibidem*, 104–169.

turn continued in the footsteps of Athanasius and Basil.²⁹ Gregory of Nyssa used philosophical analysis in his attempt to gain deeper understanding of the doctrine of the relations within the Triune Godhead.³⁰

The importance of the development of an orthodox pneumatology which affords to the Spirit full equality with the Father and the Spirit lies in the conviction that this kind of pneumatology lays the foundations for a Christian humanism.³¹ It is in the Spirit, or in the power of the Spirit, that the objective redemption in Christ can become the subjective redemption of a specific human being.³²

In the second half of the fourth century, an important group arose of people who viewed the Spirit as a kind of intermediate figure between the Father and the Son as the creators on the one hand, and the created reality on the other, and who thus denied the full divinity of the Spirit: the movement of the Pneumatomachi or Fighters against the Spirit.³³ The Pneumatomachi recognised the *homoousia* (sameness of essence) or the *homoiousia* (similarity of essence) of

29 For Gregory of Nazianzus, see CHRISTOPHER A. BEELEY, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God. In Your Light We Shall See Light*, Oxford 2008, 153–186.

30 ADOLF LAMINSKI, *Der Heilige Geist als Geist Christi und Geist der Gläubigen. Der Beitrag des Athanasios von Alexandrien zur Formulierung des Trinitarischen Dogmas im Vierten Jahrhundert*, Leipzig 1969, 176: “Gregor von Nyssa und Gregor von Nazianze sind im Wesentlichen Basileios und Athanasios gefolgt, soweit sie sich um eine Vertiefung und weitere Klärung des Problems bemüht haben.” On p. 176 n. 81: “Gregor von Nyssa vertieft die Lehre von den innertrinitarischen Relationen, wobei er methodisch den Weg der philosophischen Analyse geht.”

31 WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Gottes Geist und der Mensch. Studien zur frühchristlichen Pneumatologie*, München 1972, 288: “Die Pneumatologie bildet im 4. Jh. das Fundament für einen christlichen Humanismus.”

32 Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio* 31.4, 13–14 (*Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 27–31 [Discours théologiques]. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes par PAUL GALLAY & MAURICE JOURJON* [SC 250], Paris 1978, 282): Εἰ τέτακται μετ’ ἐμοῦ, πῶς ἐμὲ ποιεῖ Θεόν, ἢ πῶς συνάπτει θεότητι; (“If the Spirit belongs with me to the same order [of creation], how can he [the Spirit] make me God, or how can he connect me with the Godhead?”).

33 On the struggle with the Pneumatomachi, the role of Gregory of Nazianzus in Constantinople, and of Gregory of Nyssa in Asia Minor, see: MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 170–201. For a broad overview of the movement of the Pneumatomachi, its prehistory, its early forms in Egypt, for instance in Thmuis, where they were called Τροπικοί, the struggle between Eustathius of Sebaste and Basil in the 370s, and the struggle in Asia Minor and Constantinople in the 370s and 380s, in which Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa played a role, see WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen. Eine Untersuchung zur Dogmengeschichte des vierten Jahrhunderts*, Hamburg 1967; PETER MEINHOLD, *Pneumatomachoi*, in: *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft—Pauly-Wissowa* (Band XXI, Halbband 41), Stuttgart 1951, 1066–1101; RICHARD HANSON, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy 318–381*, Edinburgh

the Father and the Son, but in their zeal for the utterly literal exegesis of Scripture, they qualified the Spirit as a creation (κτίσμα) of the Father and the Son.

From 383 onwards, this movement was also known as that of the Macedonians, after Bishop Macedonius, who was elected bishop of Constantinople in 342 and was deposed in late 359 or early 360. As leader of the homoiousians, he occupied a middle position between the neo-Arians on the one hand and the homoousians on the other. Was Bishop Macedonius the founder and main protagonist of the Pneumatomachi? Macedonius died shortly after 360. He made homoiousian statements about the Father and the Son, and, following in the same vein, homoiousian statements about the essence of the Spirit. He was in touch with later leaders of the Pneumatomachi, such as Eustathius of Sebaste and Eleusius of Cyzicus. Macedonius, one of the leaders of the homoiousians, was posthumously turned into the genius of the Pneumatomachi after the collapse of the homoiousian movement, probably because the seeds of Pneumatomachian thought could be easily recognised in his works due to his homoiousian ideas. Perhaps Bishop Macedonius was indeed the first to develop the notion of the Spirit as an intermediate figure between the Creator(s) and creation which would later become the hallmark of the Pneumatomachian position.³⁴ Whatever the truth of this, given the ongoing debate about the question whether Macedonius can be regarded as the first leader of the Pneumatomachi, it is appropriate to avoid the name of Macedonians and instead to describe the movement as that of the Pneumatomachi.³⁵

The Pneumatomachi are first mentioned in the second half of Athanasius's first letter to Serapion, I.32: πνευματομαχοῦντες, written in the year 357.³⁶ Basil became heavily embroiled in a conflict with his friend Eustathius of Sebaste

1988, 760–772. Hanson gives a series of Scriptural passages that the Pneumatomachi used for their doctrine of the Holy Spirit on pp. 769–770.

34 WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen*, 239.

35 RICHARD P.C. HANSON, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, 760 n. 11, acknowledges that the name Macedonians is incorrect, but nevertheless avoids the word Pneumatomachi because it is hateful. ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ (tr.), Gregory of Nyssa, On the Holy Spirit against the Macedonian Spirit-Fighters, in: *The Cambridge Edition of Early Christian Writings. vol. 1, God, part II Creeds and Controversies (300–400)*, Cambridge 2017, 270–293, p. 270, correctly translates the indication in the mss. Given the positions espoused by the protagonists, I think Pneumatomachi is clearer than Macedonians.

36 Athanasius *Epistula 1 ad Serapionem* 32,2 (KYRIAKOS SAVVIDIS, *Athanasius Werke. Band 1, Teil 1, Die dogmatischen Schriften, Lieferung 4 Epistulae ad Serapionem* [Patristische Arbeitsstelle Bochum], Berlin 2010, 531): καὶ παρὰ πάντων δὲ κατεγνώσθησαν ὡς τῷ ὄντι πνευματομαχοῦντες. KHALED ANATOLIOS, *Athanasius* (The Early Church Fathers), London 2004, 172, 188.

about the essence of the Holy Spirit.³⁷ The conflict inspired Basil to write his work *De Spiritu Sancto*. In the circle to which Eustathius, Eleusius and Makedonius belonged, homoiousian doctrines began to be developed in a Pneumatomachian sense around 360.³⁸ During the synod of Antioch in Caria in 378, the homoiousian party split into two camps: on the one hand those who joined the homoiousians and thus accepted Nicaea, including the *homoousia* of the Spirit, and on the other those who adopted the Pneumatomachian position on the basis of their homoiousian views, and who began to form their own church community. The Emperor Theodosius, together with Gratian and Valentinian II, on 28 February 380 issued the edict *Cunctos populos*, addressed to the citizens of Constantinople, thus marking out his position as imperial policy: all were to live in unity with the faith that the Apostle Peter had handed down and that Pope Damasus of Rome and Bishop Peter of Alexandria professed: the profession of faith in the one Divinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in equal majesty and in blessed Trinity.³⁹ This in effect already condemned the position of the Pneumatomachi: they were counted among the heretics, they were deemed to be bereft of intelligence and insane; and this because they refused to recognise that the Holy Spirit was connected to the Father and the Son in equal majesty and blessed Trinity. For this reason, Theodosius threatened them with depriving them of their own places of worship. Theodosius came with an even stronger statement in his edict of 10 January 381, on the eve of his Council of Constantinople in the spring of 381: those who deny the *homoousia* of the Spirit deviated from the creed of 325. The edict spoke of the *indivisa substantia* of Father, Son, and Spirit, or in Greek: οὐσία.⁴⁰ Theodosius then undertook an unsuccessful attempt to sway the Pneumato-

37 For the controversy between Basil and Eustathius and his allies, see MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 24–49.

38 In this, I follow WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen*, 239: “Zusammenfassend wird man sagen können, daß Makedonius höchstwahrscheinlich bereits pneumatomachisch gedacht hat und daß folglich die Bezeichnung ‘Makedonianer’ einiges Recht besitzt.” Hauschild here rejects the contention by PETER MEINHOLD, *Pneumatomachoi*, 1078: “der Bischof Makedonios von Konstantinopel hat mit den Pn. nichts zu tun.”

39 Codex Theodosianus XVI.1.2.pr.

40 Codex Theodosianus XVI.5.6.2.: “Is autem nicaenae adsertor fidei, catholicae religionis verus cultor accipiendus est, qui omnipotentem deum et christum filium dei uno nomine confitetur, deum de deo, lumen ex lumine: qui spiritum sanctum, quem ex summo rerum parente speramus et accipimus, negando non violat: apud quem intemeratae fidei sensu viget incorruptae trinitatis indivisa substantia, quae graeci adsertione verbi οὐσία recte credentibus dicitur. haec profecto nobis magis probata, haec veneranda sunt.” ADOLF-MARTIN RITTER, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel und sein Symbol. Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des II. Ökumenischen Konzils*, Göttingen 1965, 305 n. 2, has observed that

machi through argument: in early 381 he invited a delegation of Pneumatomachian bishops led by Eleusius of Cyzicus, and—vainly, as it turned out—offered them a text about the Holy Spirit as a starting point for negotiations. This text, contrary to the wishes of Gregory of Nazianzus, then metropolitan of Constantinople, was silent on the *homoousia* of the Spirit and stipulated his *homotimia*. The negotiations failed to bring about reunification; after its early departure from Constantinople, the Pneumatomachian delegation advised its followers not to sign the Nicene creed under any circumstance. It became clear that the Pneumatomachian movement was an amalgamation of at least two strands: on the one hand those who believed they could fully accept the unity of essence of the Father and the Son while denying the same unity of essence of the Spirit, and on the other those who, in addition to their denial of the divinity of the Spirit, also refused to acknowledge the unity of essence of the Father and the Son.⁴¹ In *Maced*, Gregory first and foremost addresses the party that denied the divinity of the Spirit while believing it could still acknowledge the unity of essence of the Father and the Son. In his work, he demonstrates that denying the unity of essence of the Spirit with the Father and the Son unavoidably also detracts from the unity of essence of the Father and the Son. Thus these moderate Pneumatomachi are irrevocably associated with the extreme wing of the Pneumatomachi, who also denied the unity of essence of the Father and the Son, as Eunomius's views show as they are expressed in *Ref Eun*, the conclusion of Gregory's books *Contra Eunomium* (*Eun*) I, II and III. Gregory will have regarded his opposition against the Pneumatomachi as an extension of his heated conflict with Eunomius, also following in his brother Basil's footsteps.⁴²

The Council of Constantinople was held in the spring of 381 and was attended by Gregory, who played a prominent role in it. One of the outcomes of the council was that canon 1 of the council counted the Pneumatomachi among the heretics; they rejected the creed drawn up by the 318 bishops assembled in Nicaea in 325.⁴³ Theodosius undertook another attempt to reach

Theodosius had already acquainted himself with the theology of the Cappadocian Fathers and of Meletius of Antioch before the Council of Constantinople in 381.

41 TARMO TOOM, *Classical Trinitarian Theology. A Textbook*, New York 2007, 127–128.

42 BRIAN DUVICK, The Trinitarian Tracts of Gregory of Nyssa, in: HUBERTUS R. DROBNER & ALBERT VICIANO (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 1998* (VCS 52), Leiden 2000, 581–592, p. 589, argues that Gregory accuses the Pneumatomachi of Sabellian modalism; moreover, he associates them with Arians.

43 Canon 1 of the council 381: "Ὁρίσαν οἱ ἐν Κωνσταντινούπολει συνελθόντες ἅγιοι Πατέρες, μὴ

agreement with a number of Pneumatomachian leaders in July 383, but failed once again. His edicts of 25 July (Codex Theodosianus XVI.5.11.) and 3 December 383 (Codex Theodosianus XVI.5.12.) banned Pneumatomachian assemblies, deprived them the use of church buildings and prohibited the ordination of clerics. Theodosius let it be clearly understood that the interests of his empire coincided with those of the orthodox Catholic Church. In his edict of 21 January 384 (Codex Theodosianus XVI.5.13.), Theodosius exiled the Pneumatomachi, called Macedonians in this edict, from Constantinople, together with the followers of Arius, Eunomius, and Apollinarius.

In the meantime, the council fathers reconfirmed the Nicene Creed, while adding a number of phrases concerning the Spirit, thus creating the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. These additions, for all their restraint, were essentially anti-Pneumatomachian:

εἰς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον, τὸ Κύριον καὶ Ζωοποιόν, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, τὸ σὺν Πατρὶ καὶ Υἱῷ συμπροσκυνούμενον καὶ συνδοξαζόμενον, τὸ λαλῆσαν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν.⁴⁴

In the *Tomos*, which has since been lost but whose content can be reconstructed on the basis of a letter by the Synod of Constantinople in 382 and which was an explanatory statement by the council fathers intended for the Emperor Theodosius, the council fathers went beyond what they had defined in the formula of the Creed of Constantinople of 381: the *Tomos* espoused the Cappadocian doctrine of the Trinity and the pneumatology which the Cappadocians had woven into this, thus affording this theology official sanction.⁴⁵

ἀθετεῖσθαι τὴν πίστιν τῶν Πατέρων τῶν τριακοσίων δέκα ὀκτώ, τῶν ἐν Νικαίᾳ τῆς Βιθυνίας συνελθόντων· ἀλλὰ μένειν ἐκείνην κυρίαν, καὶ ἀναθεματισθῆναι πᾶσαν αἵρεσιν καὶ εἰδικῶς τὴν τῶν Εὐνομιανῶν, εἴτ' οὖν Εὐδοξιανῶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Ἠμιαρείων, εἴτ' οὖν Πνευματομάχων, καὶ τὴν τῶν Σαβελλιανῶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Μαρχελιανῶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Φωτειανῶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Ἀπολλιναριστῶν.

44 We have the text of this creed through the acts of the Council of Chalcedon in 451, in two versions (*Concilii Chalcedonensis Actio III 14* and *Actio V 33*). The version of the 5th session does not have συμπροσκυνούμενον, but προσκυνούμενον. For the complicated textual history, see HENRICUS DENZINGER & ADOLFUS SCHÖNMETZER, *Enchiridion Symbolorum Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum*, Freiburg 1967 (editio XXXIV), 66; VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL, *Die Edition des Textes des Nicaeno-Constantinopolitanums in den Konzilsakten von Chalkedon durch Schwartz*, in: UTA HEIL & ANNETTE VON STOCKHAUSEN (ed.), *Crux Interpretum—Ein kritischer Rückblick auf das Werk von Eduard Schwartz*, Berlin 2015, 111–127.

45 ADOLF-MARTIN RITTER, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel*, 307.

After the council, which concluded on 9 July, the Emperor Theodosius ratified the canons drawn up by the council fathers, including a list of signatories, in an edict of 30 July 381.⁴⁶ This edict implicitly confirmed the *homoousia* of the divine persons of the Trinity by professing the one majesty, power, honour, and glory of Father, Son, *and* Spirit, their distinctness *and* the unity of their divinity. The anathemata of canon 1 were repeated in this text in positive form.⁴⁷ In this same edict of 30 July, Theodosius confirms the decision of the council fathers to draw up a list of bishops who were orthodox in their views on the Triune Godhead. All other bishops had to ensure they were in communion with these bishops if they wished to retain or obtain their church buildings.⁴⁸ Gregory of Nyssa's name also appears on this list of bishops who came to be seen as *arbitri fidei*, arbiters of the faith.⁴⁹

Gregory will have seen his endeavours to devise a careful formulation of the position of the Spirit as one of the three divine persons as a logical sequel to the work his older brother Basil had done. After the latter's death in late September 378, Gregory began to follow in his footsteps and continue his brother's

46 Codex Theodosianus XVI.1.3. (30 July 381): "idem aaa. ad auxonium proconsulem asiae. episcopis tradi omnes ecclesias mox iubemus, qui unius maiestatis adque virtutis patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum confitentur eiusdem gloriae, claritatis unius, nihil dissonum profana divisione facientes, sed trinitatis ordinem personarum adsertione et divinitatis unitate, quos constabit communioni nectari episcopi constantinopolitanae ecclesiae nec non timothei intra aegyptum alexandrinae urbis episcopi esse sociatos; quos etiam in orientis partibus pelagio episcopo laodicensi et diodoro episcopo tarsensi: in asia nec non proconsulari adque asiana dioecesi amphilochio episcopo iconiensi et optimo episcopo antiocheno: in pontica dioecesi helladio episcopo caesariensi et otreio meliteno et gregorio episcopo nysseno, terennio episcopo scythiae, marmario episcopo marciopolitano communicare constiterit. hos ad optinendas catholicas ecclesias ex communione et consortio probabilius sacerdotum oportebit admitti: omnes autem, qui ab eorum, quos commemoratio specialis expressit, fidei communione dissentiunt, ut manifestos haereticos ab ecclesiis expelli neque his penitus posthac obtinendarum ecclesiarum pontificium facultatemque permitti, ut verae ac nicaenae fidei sacerdotia casta permaneant nec post evidentem praecepti nostri formam malignae locus detur astutiae. dat. iiii kal. aug. heracleae eucherio et syagrio cons.".

47 ADOLF-MARTIN RITTER, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel*, 128–129.

48 In his letter *Epist 1*, Gregory mentions that the council of 381 had bestowed an identical privilege upon Helladius and himself, which Gregory describes as: ἡ φροντις τῆς τῶν κοινῶν διορθώσεως (*Epist 1* GNO VIII.II. 12,1), the task of setting the house of the Church in order. This shows that the appointment of *arbitri fidei* was a decision of the council, which was confirmed by Theodosius on 30 July 381. See ADOLF-MARTIN RITTER, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel*, 130 n. 2.

49 ROBERT MALCOLM ERRINGTON, *Christian Accounts of the Religious Legislation of Theodosius I*, in: *Klio, Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte* 79 (1997) 398–443.

work, including in relation to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁰ The first fruit of this work was his reply to the physician Eustathius, a close acquaintance of his brother Basil's, not to be confused with the Pneumatomach Eustathius of Sebaste. He turned against the Pneumatomachi in this reply, entitled *Ad Eustathium, De sancta Trinitate* (*Eust*), which must have been written shortly before the council of 381, most probably in 380 during Gregory's involuntary sojourn in Sebaste, Armenia.⁵¹

Given the development of pneumatology in the second half of the fourth century and the position which Basil occupied within it, Gregory, after his letter to Eustathius in 380, wrote his work *Adversus Macedonianos* following the closure of the Council of Constantinople in 381.⁵² In between these two works, in the spring of 381, while the council was still in session, Gregory delivered a speech *De deitate adversus Euagrium*—*vulgo In suam ordinationem oratio* (*Deit Euag*), probably on the occasion of his friend Gregory of Nazianzus's inauguration as bishop of Constantinople in the spring of 381.⁵³ Negotiations with the Pneumatomachi had just collapsed. This speech shows the Nyssen as a central participant in the disputations with the Pneumatomachi.⁵⁴

50 WERNER JAEGER, *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre vom Heiligen Geist. Aus dem Nachlass herausgegeben von H. Dörries*, Leiden 1966, 10–11.

51 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Ad Eustathium De sancta Trinitate*, in: VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism. Proceedings of the 11th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Tübingen, 17–20 September 2008* (VCS 106), Leiden 2011, 89–109, pp. 91–99 (*Date and Circumstances*), p. 99: "It is likely then that *Ad Eustathium* dates to Gregory's period of detainment in Armenia, which lasted until sometime in mid-380."

52 For the arguments for this, see chapter 1, section 9.2.

53 MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 193–199, provides an extensive overview of the debate on the dating of *Deit Euag/Ord* and settles for the spring of 381. In doing so he follows ADOLF-MARTIN RITTER in his article entitled Gregor von Nyssa, 'In suam ordinationem'. Eine Quelle für die Geschichte des Konzils von Konstantinopel 381?, in: *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 79 (1968) 308–328, and GERHARD MAY in his article Die Datierung der Rede "In Suam Ordinationem" des Gregor von Nyssa und die Verhandlungen mit den Pneumatomachen auf dem Konzil von Konstantinopel 381, in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 23 (1969) 38–57, p. 47, while REINHART STAATS, in his rebuttal Die Datierung von "In Suam Ordinationem" des Gregor von Nyssa, in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 23 (1969) 58–59, still favours the Synod of Constantinople in 394. In his later publication entitled Die Basilianische Verherrlichung des Heiligen Geistes auf dem Konzil zu Konstantinopel 381, in: *Kerygma und Dogma* 25 (1979) 232–253, he has accepted Ritter's arguments for a dating in 381. Haykin has rightly pointed out that Ritter underestimates the important information that *Deit Euag* provides about the debates between the Pneumatomachi and the orthodox; debates that had broken down just before the sermon was pronounced.

54 MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 198–199: "a key figure among those bishops of

7 The Textual Tradition of *Adversus Macedonianos*

A text-critical edition of the Greek text has appeared in the illustrious *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* series of which Werner Jaeger was the genius.⁵⁵ Volumen III, Pars I of this series, entitled *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Dogmatica Minora Pars I edidit Fridericus Mueller*, Brill Leiden 1958, contains the Greek text of *Maced* (pp. 89–115; p. 88 *Conspectus Siglorum*) together with seven other, smaller doctrinal works (*Eust*, *Graec*, *Abl*, *Simpl*, *Arium*, *Theoph*, *Antirrh*). The editor of this first edition of the text was Friedrich Müller (1900–1975), a classical scholar and philologist, and a follower of Werner Jaeger. *Maced* has been handed down in two codices: *Codex Vaticanus graecus 1907 chartaceus saec. XII (XIII)*, called S in the critical apparatus; *Codex Musei Britannici 52 Burneianus membranaceus saec. XIII* (ff. 135^v–146^v),⁵⁶ called D. D, as Werner Jaeger's text critical research has shown, was a copy of S.⁵⁷ S is a paper codex that contains all of Gregory's works, but it is in extremely poor condition, which has affected legibility. In his critical apparatus, the editor of the text, Friedrich Müller, rightly, given that D is a copy of S, only mentions D wherever D deviates from S, or wherever D can help to remedy the poor legibility of S.⁵⁸ Angelo Mai S.J. (1782–1854), librarian of the Vatican library from 1819 onwards, and a cardinal from 1838 onwards, published *Maced* (together with *Arium*, see below) in 1833 as an *ined-*

the council who genuinely sought to convince the Pneumatomachian delegation of the error of their ways."

- 55 Werner Jaeger (1888–1961) was a major figure in the world of classical philology. He left Germany for the United States in 1936, and ultimately became a professor at Harvard. An important part of his text critical work was spent on preparing text critical editions of Gregory of Nyssa's works. This project commenced with the publication of *Eun* I and II in 1921, a new version of which appeared in 1960. His last work was the important book *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, Harvard 1961, Oxford 1969 (paperback). This book was based on his Carl Newell Jackson Lectures, Harvard 1960, and concluded his three-part *Paideia*, *Die Formung des Griechischen Menschen*, Berlin 1933–1947. An English translation, entitled *Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture*, Oxford 1939–1944, was prepared by Gilbert Highet. The interaction between Greek culture, especially Greek philosophy, and emerging Christianity is a main theme in his last work *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*. In the last chapter of this work, Jaeger describes Gregory of Nyssa's ideas about Christian *paideia*, ideas steeped in the Greek idea of *paideia* as it had come to Gregory particularly in Platonic form.
- 56 Accessible online, accessed on 24 November 2017: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=burney_ms_52_f135v#.
- 57 See the prolegomena of GNO II, pp. XL–XLI.
- 58 *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Dogmatica Minora Pars I edidit FRIDERICUS MUELLER*, Brill Leiden 1958, XLVIII: "qua de causa D in apparatu critico non adhibetur nisi ubi differt ab S vel S difficilis lectu est."

itum in his collected volume *Scriptorum veterum nova collectio, e Vaticanis codicibus edita, volumen VIII, pars II*, Rome 1833; and again subsequently in his collection *Patrum nova bibliotheca, tomus IV*, Rome 1847.⁵⁹ This latter edition is identical to pages 1301–1334 of Migne's *Patrologia Graeca volumen 45*, Paris 1863. However, Angelo Mai's edition of the text, and therefore also Migne's, both based on S, was not complete. Mai was not familiar with the existence of D as a manuscript copied from S. This is important, because the text of *Maced* ends in manuscript S with *δυναστεύοντα* (= GNO III.I. 113,9). The continuation of the text (= GNO III.I. 113,9 μήτε προσκυνεῖν τὸν ἡγούμενον ...—GNO III.I. 115,31, conclusion of *Maced*) can be found only in D, the manuscript copied from S. Friedrich Müller's 1958 edition is the first to add this concluding part of *Maced* to the text as it was known previously.

8 The Attribution of *Adversus Macedonianos* to Gregory of Nyssa

Both codices contain the text of *Maced* together with a work called *Arium*. It is not certain that Gregory was the author of this second text. Friedrich Müller nonetheless included it in his edition of the text in 1958, although he placed Gregory's name in square brackets beside the title of *Arium* on account of the doubts concerning Gregory's authorship.⁶⁰ The text of *Maced* does not mention Gregory of Nyssa's name as author in either codex. Müller did not doubt Gregory's authorship of *Maced* and therefore included Gregory of Nyssa's name between supplementation brackets (⟨ ⟩) beside the title of the work.⁶¹ Müller probably based this on Werner Jaeger's authoritative study *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre vom Heiligen Geist*, published after Jaeger's death in 1961 out of his estate by Hermann Dörries, Leiden 1966. In the second chapter of this book, entitled *Gregors Schrift über den Heiligen Geist. Gegen die Makedonianer, die wider den Geist streiten*, pp. 27–50, Jaeger says on p. 27 that he had no doubt that Gregory

59 As this is an *ineditum*, the indication in the *Conspectus Siglorum* van *Maced* on p. 88 of GNO III.I. of *v* = *textus vulgatus editionis Parisinae* (1638) *et Mignei* is mistaken. It should have been: *v* = *textus Mignei* (1863). On p. XLVII n. 1, Mueller acknowledges this error: "corrigenda est brevis mentio in calce conspectus siglorum errore mechanico orta."

60 *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Dogmatica Minora Pars 1 edidit FRIDERICUS MUELLER*, Brill Leiden 1958, LXI: "cum autem haec res (sc. Gregory's authorship of *Arium*) non diiudicata sit (quaerendum est, ut mihi quidem videtur, an hic liber inter primos numerandus sit, quos Gregorius scripsit), recipiendus erat in hoc volumen, nomen autem Gregorii uncis his [] inclusi."

61 *Ibidem*, LXI: "librum κατὰ Μακεδονιανῶν inscriptum a Gregorio Nysseno confectum esse sine dubio constat; itaque nomen eius uncis his ⟨ ⟩ addidi."

was the author of *Maced*: “ihre Sprache, Begriffswelt und Gedankenführung kennzeichnen sie als dessen geistiges Eigentum.”⁶² He rightly pointed out that, apart from *Arium*, the Byzantine compiler of manuscript S had only included works that were certainly Gregory’s. This strengthens or even confirms the attribution of *Maced* to Gregory. In their introduction to the great volume of the Proceedings of the 11th International Colloquium on Gregory’s Opera Minora on the Trinity and Apollinarism, Volker Henning Drecoll and Margitta Berghaus have written:

For these treatises (sc. *Eust*, *Graec*, *Abl*, *Simpl*, *Maced*) the authorship of Gregory of Nyssa can hardly be challenged, even if only one manuscript of *Adversus Macedonianos* as well as its apographon have been handed down.⁶³

The many crosslinks, addressed in the commentary, between *Maced* and works that bear Gregory’s name as author, the analysis of the language and rhetorical style carried out in the commentary, the reasoning and way of doing theology in *Maced* offer many elements that support Jaeger’s and Drecoll/Berghaus’s hypothesis: together, they prove with a probability bordering on certainty that Gregory was the author of this work.

9 The Dating of *Adversus Macedonianos*

9.1 *Shortly before, during, or after the Council of Constantinople in 381?*

It is undisputed that the work has some connection to the Council of Constantinople in 381. There is controversy, however, about whether *Maced* was written shortly before, during, or after the Council of Constantinople in 381.

62 In his introduction (on the *Echtheitsfrage*) to his German translation of *Maced*, included in his volume *Gregory of Nyssa, De Beatitudinibus IV, Ad Ablabium and Adversus Macedonianos. English and German Translations and Studies* (Patrologia xx), Frankfurt 2008, 62–63, Igor Pochoshajew writes: “Diese (sc. Werner Jaeger’s) Untersuchung ist grundlegend für das Verständnis der Abhandlung *Maced*. Mit Jäger ist zu sagen dass die sprachlichen und inhaltlichen Aspekte der Schrift sie unmissverständlich als Gregors ‘geistiges Eigentum’ ausweisen würden.”

63 VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism. Proceedings of the 11th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Tübingen, 17–20 September 2008* (VCS 106), Leiden 2011, XII.

Werner Jaeger concluded that *Maced* resulted from Gregory's conviction that a supplement was necessary to his deceased brother Basil's work *De Spiritu Sancto*, and that the contentious issue of the position of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity, which would go on to play a central role at the upcoming Council of Constantinople in 381, deserved more exhaustive treatment.⁶⁴ Jaeger felt that such an enterprise was unlikely to have been undertaken after the council and its decisions; he does not provide reasons for this belief. According to Jaeger, a first and tentative treatment of the subject resulted in *Eust*, while *Maced* was subsequently published, either immediately before the council or as a prelude to the end game during the council. *Maced* gives the impression of being a more developed work than *Eust*.⁶⁵ In his preface to Friedrich Müller's text edition (1958), Jaeger wrote that it was an easy conjecture to say that *Maced* must have been written for the benefit of the Council of Constantinople.⁶⁶

Jean Daniélou followed Jaeger and assumed that Gregory wrote *Maced* during his three-month sojourn in Sebaste in the spring of 380 (March, April, May).⁶⁷ Gerhard May, by contrast, explicitly contended that the work must be dated to shortly after the Council of Constantinople, and he rightly pointed to the theological keywords of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, echoes of which can be found in *Maced*.⁶⁸ Lucian Turcescu has used the same argu-

64 WERNER JAEGER, *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre*, 9.

65 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Ad Eustathium De sancta Trinitate*, in: VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism, Proceedings of the 11th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Tübingen, 17–20 September 2008* (VCS 106), Leiden 2011, 89–109, pp. 106–107: “*Adversus Macedonianos* is generally dated later and may reflect a more sophisticated understanding of the fundamentals of his opponents’ theology. It shows that the struggle with the Pneumatomachians continued to raise the question of how to classify divine activities.”

66 *Gregorii Nysseni Opera Dogmatica Minora Pars I edidit Fridericus Mueller*, Brill Leiden 1958, VI (Werner Jaeger's preface): “librum *Adversus Macedonianos* de spiritu sancto, quem ad usum concilii Constantinopolitani anno 381 a Gregorio conscriptum esse facilis est coniectura, nunc primum totum ac plenum legentibus offerre possumus.” Adolf-Martin Ritter, in his fundamental study on the Council of Constantinople entitled *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel und sein Symbol. Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des 11. Ökumenischen Konzils*, Göttingen 1965, 117 n. 2., dismisses Jaeger's hypothesis as no more than a conjecture.

67 JEAN DANIELOU, La chronologie des oeuvres de Grégoire de Nysse, in: *Studia Patristica* 7 (1966) 159–169, p. 163.

68 GERHARD MAY, Die Chronologie des Lebens und der Werke des Gregor von Nyssa, in: MARGUERITE HARL (ed.), *Écriture et culture philosophique dans la pensée de Grégoire de Nysse. Actes du Colloque de Chevetogne (22–26 Septembre 1969)*, Leiden 1971, 51–67, p. 59: “Gleich nach der Synode und veranlaßt durch die auf ihr geführten Verhandlun-

ment.⁶⁹ Anthony Meredith has spoken of a consensus among researchers: *Maced* was written shortly after 381.⁷⁰ In fact no such consensus exists. Lucas F. Mateo-Seco has placed *Maced* in the aftermath of the Council of Constantinople in 381.⁷¹ Following Michael A.G. Haykin, who dated *Maced* to shortly before or shortly after the Council of Constantinople,⁷² Volker Henning Drecoll and Matthieu Cassin refrained from making a clear decision on the question, instead placing *Maced* more generally in the context of the Council of Constantinople in 381.⁷³ Richard P.C. Hanson had done the same thing previously.⁷⁴ Giulio Maspero has incorrectly claimed that there is a consensus among experts that *Maced* was written before the Council of Constantinople, between the spring of 380 and the spring of 381.⁷⁵ Andrew Radde-Gallwitz believes the question of the dating of *Maced* is insoluble; it is clear that *Maced*

gen mit den Pneumatomachen dürfte Gregor *de spiritu sancto* (*adversus Macedonianos*) geschrieben haben. Die breite Erörterung der Anbetung des Geistes in dieser Schrift, die konkrete pneumatomachische Äußerungen verarbeitet, läßt sich m.E. am besten als ein Echo der mit den Pneumatomachen geführten Gespräche und als literarische Weiterführung der mündlichen Auseinandersetzung verstehen; auch die theologischen Stichwörter des Symbols der Synode scheinen in Gregors Schrift anzuklingen. Aber ein sicheres Entstehungsdatum läßt sich nicht ermitteln."

- 69 LUCIAN TURCESCU, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Concept of Divine Persons*, Oxford 2005, 114: "These words (sc. the doxology of the Father and the Son and the Spirit in *Maced* GNO III.1. 110,24–111.1) are clearly reminiscent of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, which canonized the phrase that the Holy Spirit 'together with the Father and the Son is both worshipped and glorified'."
- 70 ANTHONY MEREDITH, *Gregory of Nyssa*, New York 1999, 38.
- 71 LUCAS F. MATEO-SECO, El Espíritu Santo en el Adv. Macedonianos de Gregorio de Nisa, in: *Scripta Theologica* 37 (2005) 475–498, p. 476 n. 1.
- 72 MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 188–189: "*Maced*., which was written either shortly before the Council of Constantinople as a preparatory work for the council, or soon after the council on the basis of the discussions held at that time." Similarly, CHRISTOPH KLOCK, *Untersuchungen zu Stil und Rhythmus bei Gregor von Nyssa. Ein Beitrag zum Rhetorikverständnis der griechischen Väter*, Frankfurt 1987, 160 n. 84, dates *Maced* to 381. He mentions that *Epist* XXIV must have been written around the same time, and suggestively adds: "*nach dem Konzil?*"
- 73 VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL, *Maced*, in: *BDGN* (2010) 466–468, p. 468: "This work could have been composed in the context of the Council of Constantinople of 381, in which a reworked version of the Nicene Creed was approved." MATTHIEU CASSIN, *Contre Eunome* III: une introduction, in: JOHAN LEEMANS & MATTHIEU CASSIN (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium* III, *Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Leuven, 14–17 September 2010* (VCS 124), Leiden 2014, 3–33, p. 7.
- 74 RICHARD P.C. HANSON, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy 318–381*, Edinburgh 1988, 717.
- 75 GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 229.

was not written before 379; perhaps it was written during the council of 381, but a later date cannot be excluded.⁷⁶

It must be stated a priori that the debate about pneumatology continued unabated after the Council of Constantinople.⁷⁷ There is no reason to assume that the fact that *Maced* deals with the Spirit as such proves that it must have been written shortly before or during the council.

9.2 *Gregory Writes Adversus Macedonianos in His Role of arbiter fidei*

The debate so far has not regarded Gregory's appointment as *arbiter fidei* as an important argument for dating *Maced* to immediately after the Council of Constantinople. I think *Maced* must be placed in the context of the task of *arbiter fidei* with which the Emperor Theodosius charged him on 30 July 381. I use the term *arbiter fidei* here in a specific sense, as meaning a bishop of whom the secular power, in this case the emperor, has declared that he serves as a criterion for judging the reliability and orthodoxy of ecclesiastical officials. The judgement of such bishops on the orthodoxy of these ecclesiastical officials has legal consequences for their position. If the judgement is negative, they will be deprived of their place of worship; if it is positive, they will be left in possession of their churches or they will be given a church seized from an official whose review was less favourable.

The following indications in *Maced* show that Gregory wrote it in his role of *arbiter fidei*.

At the beginning of *Maced*, Gregory breaks his silence as he has made it his goal to correct certain wicked insights: ἐπὶ διορθώσει τῶν μοχθηρῶν ὑπολήψεων (*Maced* GNO III.1. 89,10). The fact that Gregory uses διόρθωσις in this specific passage points to his role as *arbiter fidei* which he was given during the Council of 381. This constitutes an important indication for the dating of *Maced*.

In his edict of 30 July 381 (Codex Theodosianus XVI.1.3.), the Emperor Theodosius ratified a list of *arbitri fidei* drawn up by the council fathers.⁷⁸ Bishops could henceforth prove their orthodoxy by maintaining *communio* with the *arbitri* designated for his area. For the diocese of Pontica, the *arbitri* selected were Helladius of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Otreius of Melitene. The

76 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrinal Works. A Literary Study*, Oxford 2018, 65.

77 WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen*, 12, mentions imperial heresy edicts from 383, 384, 423 and 428.

78 Codex Theodosianus XVI.1.3, Sozomen, *Historia Ecclesiastica* VII.9.6. This imperial edict with its theological introduction is entirely consistent with the anathemata of canon 1 of the council. ADOLF MARTIN RITTER, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel*, 129–130, speaks of *Normalbischöfe*.

edict was specifically addressed to Auxonius, the proconsul of Asia Proconsularis. Under the reign of Theodosius, Asia Proconsularis was a province in western Asia Minor, an administrative region that was part of the diocese of Asiana. This diocese, a larger administrative unit of the Roman Empire, had been created during the reorganisation of the Roman Empire by the Emperors Diocletian and Constantine. In addition to the province of Asia, the diocese of Asiana also encompassed the provinces of Hellespont, Insulae, Lydia, Caria, Phrygia I, Phrygia II, Lycia, Pamphylia, and Pisidia.⁷⁹ The diocese of Asiana and the dioceses of Thracia, Pontica, Oriens, and Aegyptus together made up the prefecture of Oriens. A prefecture was the largest administrative unit, governed by a *praefectus praetorio*. A diocese was led by a *vicarius*. These imperial dioceses were reflected in the ecclesiastical organisation that copied them and placed so-called exarchs at the head of the ecclesiastical dioceses. The reason that Auxonius, proconsul of the province of Asia, was chosen as the addressee of the edict of 30 July 381, issued by the Emperor Theodosius after the closure of the Council of Constantinople in the spring of 381, could well have been that it was precisely in his province that the Pneumatomachi held most episcopal sees, at least 36, and that they had proven to be unwilling to reach a compromise with the orthodox. Auxonius in particular must have found it difficult to find suitable candidates to fill the sees that were falling vacant due to Theodosius's law.⁸⁰ The edict may have been intended to help find suitable candidates pre-

79 DANIËLLE SLOOTJES, Late Antique Administrative Structures: On the Meaning of Dioceses and their Borders in the Fourth Century A.D., in: LEE L. BRICE & DANIËLLE SLOOTJES (ed.), *Aspects of Ancient Institutions and Geography. Studies in Honor of Richard J.A. Talbert* (Impact of Empire: Roman Empire. C. 200 B.C.–A.D. 476, 19), Leiden 2015, 177–195, describes the structure of the Roman Empire in the fourth century: prefectures as the largest administrative units, followed by dioceses as the administrative units just below the prefectures, and the provinces. She has also demonstrated on the basis of Christian travel accounts like the *Itinerarium Burdigalense* (of the year 333) and *Itinerarium Egeriae* (in the 380s) and of the pagan *Expositio totius mundi et gentium* (a geographical compendium from the 350s), that dioceses functioned at that time mainly as administrative units, without much meaning for instance for travellers who crossed the border from one diocese to another.

80 ROBERT MALCOLM ERRINGTON, Christian Accounts of the Religious Legislation of Theodosius I, in: *Klio, Beiträge zur Alten Geschichte* 79 (1997) 398–443, pp. 436–443 (in the Appendix, entitled *Laws Issued to the Proconsul of Asia*), esp. pp. 440–443, makes this fascinating suggestion. As a consequence of the dominance of the heterodox, even in Constantinople, this ecclesial community offers a good example of the difficulties that could be encountered in trying to find a suitable successor, in this case for Gregory of Nazianzus, who retired in the second half of June 381, shortly before the end of the Council of Constantinople on 9 July (see ADOLF-MARTIN RITTER, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel*, 112 n. 1).

cisely for this part of the diocese of Asiana. It is striking in this context that the edict does not mention any 'normative bishop' for Auxonius's province of Asia, but instead refers to two bishops outside the province of Asia but within the diocese of Asiana: Amphilochius of Iconium and Optimus of Antioch in Pisidia. The edict was intended to transfer the management of the churches to orthodox priests and bishops, and it therefore included a brief description of orthodoxy. Those who are orthodox in Theodosius's judgement, that is those who unconditionally accept the canons of Constantinople 381, described as the profession of the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the three Persons of the Triune Godhead, one in majesty, in power, in glory, in divinity, must be given the churches:

qui unius maiestatis adque virtutis patrem et filium et spiritum sanctum confitentur eiusdem gloriae, claritatis unius, nihil dissonum profana divisione facientes, sed trinitatis ordinem personarum adsertione et divinitatis unitate.

This is followed by the stipulation of *communio* with the bishops who are then listed. These bishops, mentioned by name in the edict, may have had the task of nominating suitable candidates from their own territories and providing them with the right letters of credence. Or it may have been that candidates presented themselves to the bishops mentioned to ask them for the right letters of credence.

Previously, in the edict *Cunctos Populos* of 28 February 380 mentioned above (Codex Theodosianus XVI.1.2.pr.), the Emperor Theodosius had already set a similar requirement of orthodoxy, described as:

ut secundum apostolicam disciplinam evangelicamque doctrinam patris et filii et spiritus sancti unam deitatem sub parili maiestate et sub pia trinitate credamus.

In this edict, *communio* with pontifex Damasus of Rome and episcopus Peter of Alexandria is set as the norm for orthodoxy.⁸¹ The edict is important because

81 The importance of the see of Alexandria which is evident in the edict *Cunctos Populos* of 28 February 380, and the dubious role played by Peter, bishop of Alexandria, after the deposition of the Arian Demophilus as bishop of Constantinople in 380 after his refusal to heed the Emperor Theodosius's command to accept the Nicene Creed, is manifested particularly clearly in the way Peter of Alexandria ultimately reached out to Gregory of Nazianzus on the basis of a provision in the edict *Cunctos Populos* of 28 February 380,

it was an attempt to bridge religious differences by defining the essence of the Christian doctrine of the faith, the Triune Godhead of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in accordance with apostolic and evangelical teaching and by appointing Pope Damasus and Bishop Peter as its guardians. This remarkable edict shows that the emperor relinquished the initiative when it comes to questions of faith to the Church.⁸²

The follow-up edict of 10 January 381 (Codex Theodosianus XVI.5.6.) goes even further: in it, the emperor associates the orthodox faith with Nicaea 325 (*fides Nicaena*) and provides a brief definition. The emperor harshly states that the heretics must be expelled and that their churches must be returned to the orthodox bishops who profess the faith of Nicaea. What is striking in this edict is that it does not mention any persons as witnesses of the orthodox faith, as the previous edict of 28 February 380 (Damasus pm. and Peter ep.) and the later edict of 30 July 381 (the series of 'normative bishops') did.

The later edict of 30 July 381, in addition to the previously adopted canons of the council of 381, shows that a power shift was taking place at the behest of the Emperor Theodosius in the direction of Constantinople.⁸³ Theodosius defined orthodoxy and made it enforceable by the imperial power specifically for the eastern part of the Empire in two ways: through an authoritative text that describes the content of the orthodox faith, in full accord with the canons which the council fathers just adopted, and through living witnesses, the 'normative bishops' or *arbitri fidei*. These were living witnesses who, in the emperor's eyes, embodied orthodoxy in the East.⁸⁴

Theodosius's list was headed by Nectarius of Constantinople and Timothy of Alexandria, followed by the dioceses of Oriens, Asiana (of which Asia Proconsularis was a province), the diocese of Pontica, to which Gregory of Nyssa belonged, and bishops of the diocese of Thracia (which is not mentioned as

comparable to a provision in *Episcopis tradi* of 30 July 381, and had him appointed bishop of Constantinople. See ADOLF-MARTIN RITTER, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel*, 47–53.

82 KARL LEO NOETHLICH, Revolution from the top? «Orthodoxy» and the persecution of heretics in imperial legislation from Constantine to Justinian, in: CLIFFORD ANDO & JÖRG RÜPKE (ed.), *Religion and Law in Classical and Christian Rome* (Potsdamer Altertums-wissenschaftliche Beiträge 15), Stuttgart 2006, 115–125, p. 122: "The *civitas dei* had precedence over the *civitas terrena*." Noethlich points out that Theodosius was the first emperor who did not bear the title of *pontifex maximus* and who forwent the privilege of the Roman emperors since Augustus to intervene directly in *religio* and *sacra publica*.

83 See ADOLF-MARTIN RITTER, *Das Konzil von Konstantinopel*, 85–96.

84 KARL LEO NOETHLICH, Revolution from the top?, 123.

such⁸⁵). The edict set out two measures: giving churches to orthodox candidates who live in *communio* with the bishops mentioned, and expelling the heretics. Asia Proconsularis, governed by Auxonius as proconsul, lacked normative bishops. Potential candidates could instead report to Antioch in Pisidia and Iconium further away.

This was the only time that orthodoxy was defined in this way on the basis of normative bishops.⁸⁶

The fact that Theodosius took measures against those who deviated from the Nicene Creed was of course due to his principle that the defence of the Catholic, that is the orthodox, Church, was integral to the defence of his empire and imperial power.⁸⁷ Theodosius's decision to delegate part of his power to bishops was consistent with the growing importance of bishops as civil officials, especially in the administration of justice. The *episcopalis audientia* is an eloquent example.⁸⁸ Naturally Theodosius's edict favoured only bishops who were loyal to him, and through them, future candidates for the office of bishop who equally supported his policies.

In his *Epist* 11 GNO VIII.II. 17,4–5, Gregory says that he has been charged by the council, that is the council of 381, to correct the ecclesiastical community of Arabia: διορθώσεως ἕνεκεν.⁸⁹ It is very probable that he fulfilled this task on the basis of his appointment as *arbiter fidei*. The council fathers of 381 and the Emperor Theodosius obviously regarded Gregory as sufficiently authoritative to entrust him with missions and with the task of dealing with difficult issues and of correcting undesirable developments. In his biography of Macrina (*Macr* GNO VIII.I. 394,15–18), his sister Macrina compared the local renown of their father with Gregory's renown, which surpassed the borders of Pontus:

85 ROBERT MALCOLM ERRINGTON, *Christian Accounts*, 441 n. 232, gives reasons why Thracia was mentioned in the original text of this edict.

86 ROBERT MALCOLM ERRINGTON, *Christian Accounts*, 442. Errington speaks of “‘administrative’ bishops”.

87 CAROLINE HUMFRESS, *Orthodoxy and the Courts in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 2007, 217–268 (ch. 8, *Defining Heresy and Orthodoxy*, and ch. 9, *Heresy and the Courts*), demonstrates the close connection between the interests of the State and of the Church in defining orthodoxy and heterodoxy.

88 JILL HARRIES, *Law and Empire in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge 1999, 191–211, has dedicated a chapter to this; CLAUDIA RAPP, *Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity. The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* (The Transformation of the Classical Heritage 37), Berkeley 2005, 242–252, the chapter *Episcopal Courts* (*Episcopalis Audientia*).

89 ANNA M. SILVAS, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters*, 48, explains why the words τῆς ἀγίας συνόδου (*Epist* 11 GNO VIII.II. 17,4) refer to the council of 381 rather than to the Council of Antioch in 379: “There was simply no time for such a lengthy mission (sc. the mission to Arabia) further south in that hurried year of 379.”

καὶ σὲ πρὸς συμμαχίαν τε καὶ διόρθωσιν ἐκκλησίαι πέμπουσι καὶ ἐκκλησίαι καλοῦσι. This work, too, contains an indication of the task given to Gregory of correcting, that is restoring orthodoxy, on the commission or invitation of ecclesiastical communities, πρὸς συμμαχίαν τε καὶ διόρθωσιν.⁹⁰ In his *Epist* I GNO VIII.II. 12,1, Gregory recounts his tensions with Basil's successor in the see of Caesarea, Helladius of Caesarea, the metropolitan, who had, like Gregory, been appointed *arbiter fidei* at the Council of 381. During a visit to Helladius, Gregory tells us, he was treated inhospitably and unfairly. In this letter, *Epist* 1, addressed to Flavian, Meletius's elected successor in the see of Antioch during the council of 381, Gregory complains of his unfair treatment at the hands of Helladius.⁹¹ He asks how he deserved this treatment. As far as the dignity of the priesthood is concerned, the council of 381 surely bestowed the same privilege upon Helladius and himself, a privilege that Gregory describes as ἡ φροντίς τῆς τῶν κοινῶν διορθώσεως (*Epist* I GNO VIII.II. 12,1), the task of putting the house of the Church in order.⁹²

We can conclude on the basis of these texts that it belonged to the tasks of the *arbiter fidei* to set right what was wrong in the Church, to correct erroneous views. That Gregory should mention this concept twice in the introduction to *Maced* is an important indication that he wrote his work *Maced* in his function as *arbiter fidei*, a charge imposed upon him by the Emperor Theodosius in his edict of 30 July 381.⁹³

It was very important to the Emperor Theodosius to push back against the heterodox movements that were causing division within his empire. The series of laws against the heretics who attacked the doctrine of Nicaea is clear testi-

90 PIERRE MARAVAL, *Grégoire de Nysse, Vie de Sainte Macrine* (SC 178), Paris 1971, 67, places this work in the last months of 380, not later than in the years 382–383.

91 ANNA M. SILVAS, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters*, 106, dates this letter to 383.

92 RAYMOND VAN DAM, *Becoming Christian. The Conversion of Roman Cappadocia*, Philadelphia 2003, 62, argues that Gregory's aversion to Helladius was due not only to Gregory's displeasure at his inhospitable treatment by Helladius, but also to Gregory's belief that Helladius was not a worthy successor to Basil in the venerable see of Caesarea. VASILIKI LIMBERIS, *Bishops Behaving Badly. Helladius Challenges Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa*, in: CHRISTOPHER A. BEELEY (ed.), *Re-reading Gregory of Nazianzus. Essays on History, Theology, and Culture*, Washington 2012, 159–177, provides an extensive description of the long-drawn-out tensions between Helladius, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Gregory of Nyssa. Gregory of Nyssa's *Epist* XVII from the late 380s or early 390s similarly testifies to these tensions. Gregory opposed a candidate for the see of Nicomedia in Pontus, who was unworthy in his eyes but who had the support of Helladius.

93 See especially *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,12–15. Gregory speaks of ἐπὶ διορθώσει τῶν μοχθηρῶν ὑπολήψεων.

mony to this.⁹⁴ The fact that the emperor asked authoritative bishops to promote orthodoxy across the borders of their dioceses to combat lasting disharmony, is similarly proof.⁹⁵ We may assume that he was willing to accept the consequences: resistance to his measures, which did in fact emerge.⁹⁶

In view of this context, I think *Maced* can be dated to shortly after 30 July 381.

10 What Was Gregory's Intended Audience? What Was His Purpose? To What Genre Does This Work Belong?

10.1 *The Title*

The title of *Maced* as it appears in both manuscripts is ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΙΑΝΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΜΑΧΩΝ. This title clearly indicates the subject of the work: the Holy Spirit. It also mentions the group against which the work is directed, the Macedonians, the fighters against the Spirit. Given that there is a single original manuscript—S—it may well be asked whether ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΙΑΝΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΜΑΧΩΝ is a later addition to the title ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ, as an interpretation of the work, added either at an early or a later stage.⁹⁷ The fact that the text is directed against the Pneumatomachi does not necessarily mean that they are also the addressees! We cannot a priori rule out that the Pneumatomachi who are addressed in the text are not the author's intended audience. It is entirely pos-

94 JEAN ROUGÉ, La législation de Théodose contre les hérétiques. Traduction de C. Th. xvi, 5, 6–24, in: J. FONTAINE & CH. KANNENGISSER (ed.), *Epektasis. Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou*, Beauchesne 1972, 635–649, gives the Latin text as well as a translation of these laws from the Codex Theodosianus.

95 BRENT D. SHAW, *Sacred Violence. African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine*, Cambridge 2011, in the chapter *Guardians of the people* (pp. 348–408) of this impressive book, shows the important role that authoritative bishops like Augustine had in Western Roman North Africa in preserving social peace and in combating heterodox movements that were causing trouble, if needs be across the borders of their dioceses. The power of the word in sermons must not be underestimated (p. 408). Shaw has described (pp. 42–46) the role that Theodosius senior, *magister militum* in North Africa, and father of Theodosius junior, the later emperor, played in the 370s in combating unrest and rebellion.

96 The church historians Socrates Scholasticus (c. 380–after 439), *Historia Ecclesiastica* v.10, and Sozomen (c. 400–c. 450), *Historia Ecclesiastica* vii.12, mention this. Sozomen adds that Theodosius preferred to use intimidation, but often omitted or mitigated the execution of measures announced.

97 WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen*, 68 n. 3.

sible that addressing opponents is a rhetorical device that the author of the letter uses to give encouragement to his own supporters.

10.2 *The Rhetorical Introduction—A Circular Letter*

The introduction of the work is of a rhetorical nature. Immediately, in *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,2 Gregory appeals to one of Solomon's wise instructions "not to answer a fool according to his folly." This instruction is described in *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,11 as an instruction from Proverbs: τὸ παροιμιῶδες παράγγελμα. It is an indication that this letter is important. In his work *Περὶ ἐρμηνείας* (= *De Elocutione*) 4.232, written in the first century AD using material from the first century BC,⁹⁸ and influenced by Aristotle's *Ars Rhetorica*, Demetrius observes that using a proverb or saying can embellish a letter as a sign of sophistication. The writer who heeds this advice distinguishes himself through a certain artfulness instead of the confidential talk that is usually characteristic of letters.⁹⁹

Gregory announces in the very first lines that he intends to respond in this work to empty statements that he finds detestable, made by as yet anonymous opponents. If the title of the work was not Gregory's, then he leaves his audience to guess who these opponents are until lines *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,16–18. It becomes clear eventually that the opponents are the people who make accusations of impiety to those who have exalted insights concerning the Holy Spirit:

They charge that, with respect to the Holy Spirit, those who hold ideas worthy of its grandeur are impious.

Gregory gives no indication in this introduction that he has any specific addressees in mind. This could be a first indication that this letter is of a general nature, and may even be regarded as a circular letter.

10.3 *In Basil's Footsteps*

At the very start of his work, Gregory places himself in the footsteps of his deceased brother Basil. At the end of the penultimate chapter (xxix) of *De Spiritu Sancto* (375), Basil discusses the accusation made against him from several quarters that, by including the Spirit in the doxology of the Triune Godhead

98 DIRK MARIE SCHENKEVELD, *Studies in Demetrius On Style*, Amsterdam 1964, 135–148 (= *Chapter VII The Question of Date*), esp. 147–148.

99 Demetrius *Περὶ ἐρμηνείας* (= *De Elocutione*) 4.232 (ed. W. RHYS ROBERTS): Κάλλος μέντοι αὐτῆς αἶ τε φιλικαὶ φιλοφρονήσεις καὶ πυκναὶ παροιμίαι ἐνοῦσαι· καὶ τοῦτο γὰρ μόνον ἐνέστω αὐτῇ σοφόν, διότι δημοτικόν τί ἐστὶν ἢ παροιμία καὶ κοινόν, ὃ δὲ γνωμολογῶν καὶ προτρεπόμενος οὐ δι' ἐπιστολῆς ἔτι λαλοῦντι ἔοικεν, ἀλλὰ μηχανῆς.

(with the Holy Spirit), he is an innovator, an inventor of new words.¹⁰⁰ This accusation, Basil contends, is proof that his opponents are guilty of blasphemy against the Spirit. Basil asks himself whether perhaps the time for keeping silent (Eccles 3:7b: “a time for keeping silent and a time for speaking”) has come, given the whirlwind of deception and fallacious arguments from his opponents.¹⁰¹ In his last chapter (xxx), Basil describes the combat between orthodoxy and the heretics as a naval battle: the tempest and raging waves mix the ships together, and chaos and confusion ensue. Anarchy prevails, and the disease of ambition and pride is rampant. The unwillingness and inability to listen to each other cause Basil to believe it is more useful to be silent than to speak.¹⁰² But the love that conquers all difficulties of time and circumstance, as the example of the three youths in Babylon shows, nevertheless inspires him to break his silence. Basil fixes his hope on the assistance of the Holy Spirit, and proclaims the truth freely; he does not shirk

from the service of that doctrine, which by the tradition of the Fathers has been preserved by an unbroken sequence of memory to our own day.¹⁰³

At the very end of his work, Basil turns again directly to the addressee of *De Spiritu Sancto*, Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium. He invites him to ask questions so that Amphilochius might enhance his knowledge through their answers. Basil even expresses the following expectation:

Either through me or through others the Lord will grant full explanation on matters which have yet to be made clear, according to the knowledge supplied to the worthy by the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁴

100 Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* (xxix 75,1): Πῶς οὖν καινотόμος ἐγώ, καὶ νεωτέρων ῥημάτων δημιουργός ...;

101 Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* (xxix 75,45–46): “Ἡ τάχα οὗτος ἦν « ὁ καιρὸς τοῦ σιγᾶν », κατὰ τὸν σοφὸν Σολομώντα.

102 Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* (xxx 78,1–8): Διὰ ταῦτα λυσιτελεστέραν τοῦ λόγου τὴν σιῶπην ἐτιθέμην, ὥς οὐ δυναμένης φωνῆς ἀνθρώπου διὰ τοσούτων θορύβων εἰσακουσθῆναι. Εἰ γὰρ ἀληθὴ τὰ τοῦ Ἐκκλησιαστοῦ ῥήματα, ὅτι « Λόγοι σοφῶν ἐν ἀναπαύσει ἀκούονται », πολλοὶ ἂν θέοι πρέπειν τῇ νῦν καταστάσει τὸ περὶ τούτων λέγειν. Ἐμὲ δὲ καὶ τὸ προφητικὸν ἐκεῖνο κατέχει λόγιον, ὅτι « Ὁ συνίων ἐν τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ σιωπήσεται, διότι ὁ καιρὸς πονηρὸς ἐστίν ».

103 Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* (xxx 79,14–16): τὸν λόγον διακονεῖν, τὸν ἐκ τῆς τῶν πατέρων παραδόσεως πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἀκολουθίᾳ μνήμης διασωθέντα (transl. by BLOMFIELD JACKSON).

104 Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* (xxx 79,25–28): Δώσει γὰρ ὁ Κύριος ἢ δι’ ἡμῶν, ἢ δι’ ἐτέρων, τῶν λειπόντων τὴν πλήρωσιν κατὰ τὴν ἐπιχορηγομένην τοῖς ἀξίοις αὐτοῦ γνώσιν ὑπὸ τοῦ Πνεύματος (transl. by BLOMFIELD JACKSON).

Scholars have repeatedly asked why Basil did not simply attribute the predicate of God to the Spirit or declare the Spirit as being of one essence with the Father and the Son. In his *De Spiritu Sancto* xxvii 66–68, Basil draws an interesting distinction between *κήρυγμα* and *δόγμα*. *Κήρυγμα* is the public profession of faith, whereas *δόγμα*, given the *lex orandi*, contains the mystery of the faith that can only become *κήρυγμα* through growth and development to maturity: from *lex orandi* to *lex credendi*.¹⁰⁵ It is conceivable that Basil thought the time was not yet ripe for definitive statements about the Spirit.¹⁰⁶

At the beginning of *Maced*, Gregory returns to the question that Basil posed at the end of *De Spiritu Sancto* whether it is not a time to keep silent according to Solomon's wise counsel. Both as regards (rhetorical) form and content, Gregory follows in his brother's footsteps from the start. Gregory demonstrates his connectedness with Basil again at the end of *Maced*: the final doxology (GNO III.1. 115,29–32) is in exactly the form that Basil defends as legitimate in his work *De Spiritu Sancto*.

In his eulogy on Basil (*Bas*), delivered during the period that *Maced* was written, and structured chiasmically (with Basil at the centre, and figures from the Old Testament appearing again in reverse order), Gregory praises Basil as an exemplary bishop, exemplary particularly in his struggle with the heterodox, especially the neo-Arians. The eulogy contains special references to Moses and Paul as his great role models.¹⁰⁷

105 HERMAN JOSEF SIEBEN SJ, *Basilius von Cäsarea, De Spiritu Sancto. Über den Heiligen Geist, übersetzt und eingeleitet* (Fontes Christiani, 12), Freiburg 1993, 272 n. 6.

106 HERMAN JOSEF SIEBEN SJ, *Basilius von Cäsarea, De Spiritu Sancto*, 46: "Nach ihm (sc. Basilius) gehört es zum Wesen christlicher Erkenntnis, daß sie eben Zeit zum Reifen und Wachsen braucht. Sätze des Dogmas wie 'Der Heilige Geist ist Gott' oder 'Der Heilige Geist ist dem Sohn und dem Vater wesensgleich' können in einer gegebenen Situation für viele anstößig, unverständlich sein, weil ihre theologische Erkenntnis noch nicht bis zu diesem Punkt der Einsicht gereift ist."

107 MARGUERITE HARL, Moïse figure de l'évêque dans l'Éloge de Basile de Grégoire de Nyse (381). Un plaidoyer pour l'autorité épiscopale, in: ANDREAS SPIRA (ed.), *The Biographical Works of Gregory of Nyssa. Proceedings of the Fifth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Mainz, 6–10 September 1982* (Patristic Monograph Series 12), Cambridge USA 1984, 71–119. MICHAEL STUART WILLIAMS, *Authorised Lives in Early Christian Biography. Between Eusebius and Augustine* (Cambridge Classical studies), Cambridge 2008, 58–100 (= chapter 3 *Gregory and Basil: a double life*), goes even further and says on pp. 94–95 about Moses in Gregory's later *Vit Moys*: "he (sc. Moses) was perhaps to be considered less as a model for Basil, and more as a projection of Basil and his concerns into the distant biblical past ... The world of late antiquity had now become the basis for imagining the world of the Bible." Aaron would refer to Gregory himself (pp. 96–100).

10.4 *Gregory's Role as arbiter fidei*

It is Basil's younger brother Gregory of Nyssa, who, accused of impiety on account of his exalted insights concerning the Holy Spirit, breaks the silence praised so highly by Solomon to correct the erroneous insights and to check the proliferation of the cancer of heresy in his work *Maced*, spurred on by his role as *arbiter fidei* to which the Emperor Theodosius called him on 30 July 381. It was no surprise that this honour was bestowed upon him. Shortly after Basil's death in late September 378, he was asked by the Synod of Antioch in September 379 to bring back to the healthy doctrine of faith the movement of the Marcellians, so named after Bishop Marcellus of Ancyra, who, in his opposition to Arianism, regarded the Logos merely as an actualised potentiality of God, thus stepping into the tradition of Sabellius, as Gregory recounts in his *Epistula V GNO VIII.11.33*,^{1–34,7}.

In *Maced*, too, Gregory is concerned with the healthy doctrine of faith, in this case the conviction that true humanity, i.e. redeemed humanity, is impossible without the recognition of the divinity of the Spirit.¹⁰⁸ In this sense, the work *Maced* is situationally determined.¹⁰⁹ It was written on the basis of the need that Gregory felt to oppose the threatening spread of the heresy against the Spirit.

Perhaps *Maced* was intended as a circular letter, specifically for the benefit of his fellow *arbitri fidei*, who had all attended the Council of Constantinople in 381. This letter allowed Gregory to present himself as a prominent and influential member of this 'college', and to help his colleagues in their task of providing references to candidates for the priesthood and the episcopate in the various ecclesiastical communities from which the Pneumatomachi had been forced to retreat. The orthodoxy of these candidates had to comply with the canons of the Council of Constantinople of 381, as confirmed by the Emperor Theodosius.

108 MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 193: "This experiential aspect of Gregory's pneumatology is even more prominent in *ordin.* (= *Deit Euag*, my addition), a sermon given at the Council of Constantinople."

109 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Ad Eustathium*, 90–91: "... a tendency, particularly evident among modern systematic theologians, to treat these short works (sc. *Eust.*, *Abl.*, *Maced*) as relatively timeless statements of Gregory's Trinitarian theology—or, indeed, of Cappadocian Trinitarianism as a whole. It is important to place these works (whether or not they are letters as *Ad Eustathium* is) in their concrete historical context in order to avoid certain distortions ... Rather, it is a way of responding to assumptions held by his 'Pneumatomachian' opponents."

10.5 *A Counteraccusation*

The form that Gregory chose for his work was rhetorical.¹¹⁰ He states that he is being accused by his opponents of impiety. We have no indication that Gregory ever faced any actual charge of impiety, although we may presume that at the time of the controversies during the Council of Constantinople in 381 he had to endure the accusations of his opponents that his struggle for the divinity of the Spirit had led him to commit impiety as a tritheist or a Sabellian. The accusation and counter-accusation that are mentioned are, therefore, first and foremost forms of rhetorical language, of which Gregory makes eager use.

Gregory responds in the form of a letter against the accusation of impiety by making a counteraccusation, a rhetorical device (*ἀντέγκλημα*, *translatio criminis*) that we know from forensic rhetoric.¹¹¹ Gregory had been trained in (forensic) rhetoric, and had worked some time as a teacher of rhetoric before becoming a bishop. This rhetoric helped the up-and-coming rhetor not only to pursue a secular career, but it could also serve as the stepping stone to a career within the Church, which was closely linked with the Roman Empire. Once he had become a bishop, Gregory used the techniques of this rhetoric to support the campaign, encouraged among others by the Emperor Theodosius, to promote the true doctrine and to combat the heterodox beliefs that threatened the unity of society.¹¹²

110 AVERIL CAMERON, *Christianity and the Rhetoric of Empire: The Development of Christian Discourse* (Sather Classical Lectures 55), Berkeley 1991, 135: "More than that, the great Christian speeches of the later part of the century, like those by Gregory of Nyssa on Bishop Meletius or on Gregory's brother Basil, gave a new meaning to public oratory. In the revived urban culture of the fourth century, Christian bishops succeeded to the place of the epideictic orators of the Second Sophistic; and their speeches were more political than the earlier ones ever could be. Gregory of Nyssa does not merely describe: he wishes to persuade, and he has the whole armory of classical technique at his disposal."

111 CAROLINE HUMFRESS, *Orthodoxy and the Courts in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 2007, *passim*, demonstrates the close connection between the interests of the State and those of the Church in the development of orthodoxy and heterodoxy, and the important role that bishops trained in forensic rhetoric played in this.

112 FABIAN SIEBER, *Mehr als schöner Schein. Rhetorische Bildung als konstitutives Element von Theologie am Beispiel der überlieferten Briefe Gregors von Nyssa*, in: JOHAN LEEMANS & MATTHIEU CASSIN (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III, Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Leuven, 14–17 September 2010* (VCS 124), Leiden 2014, 686–703, shows that Gregory uses the rhetorical devices that were regarded as reliable in his world and that befitted his role and position. On p. 703: "Die Mittel der Rhetorik garantierten in diesem Zusammenhang die Vermittelbarkeit des Werkes im Bereich der gebildeten Welt." A world in which Gregory's theology could develop and bear fruit.

In doing so, Gregory was in excellent company, because his use of forensic rhetoric is reminiscent of what Paul does for instance in his 2 Corinthians and his letter to the Galatians (1:6–4:11), where he makes optimal use of forensic rhetoric, and specifically of the device of the counteraccusation.¹¹³ In response to the accusations of impiety, Gregory makes a counteraccusation in the form of a circular letter: those persons who deny the divine nature of the Spirit commit impiety themselves, not just against the Spirit, but also against the Father and the Son.

10.6 *Three Types of Epistolary Style*

In his work *Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι Χαρακτήρες*, 4th–6th century, Pseudo-Libanius begins by proposing the following definition of a letter:

A letter, then, is a kind of written conversation with someone from whom one is separated, and it fulfills a definite need. One will speak in it as though one were in the company of the absent person.¹¹⁴

Then Pseudo-Libanius lists the various types of epistolary style that can be distinguished. In this list, the counteraccusation (*ἀντεγκληματική*) features as no. 18 (17'). Pseudo-Libanius describes this type as follows:

The counter-accusing style is that in which we bring a countercharge against someone by accusing him of what is brought against us, thus turning the charge around upon the accuser.¹¹⁵

Of course Pseudo-Libanius acknowledges that any specific letter may contain a mixture of types of epistolary style.¹¹⁶ The second main type that we find in *Maced* is the paraenetic style:

113 FREDRICK J. LONG, *Ancient Rhetoric and Paul's Apology. The Compositional Unity of 2 Corinthians*, Cambridge 2004, *passim*; G. WALTER HANSEN, *Abraham in Galatians. Epistolary and Rhetorical Contexts*, Sheffield 1989 and London 2015, 59.

114 Pseudo-Libanius *Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι Χαρακτήρες* 2 (ed. *Libanii Opera* vol. 9, R. FOERSTER, Leipzig 1927; reprinted in ABRAHAM J. MALHERBE, *Ancient Epistolary Theorists* [SBL Sources for Biblical Study 19], Atlanta 1988, 66): *Ἐπιστολή μὲν οὖν ἐστὶν ὁμιλία τις ἐγγράμματος ἀπόντος πρὸς ἀπόντα γινομένη καὶ χρειώδη σκοπὸν ἐκπληροῦσα, ἐρεῖ δὲ τις ἐν αὐτῇ ὥσπερ παρών τις πρὸς παρόντα.*

115 Pseudo-Libanius *Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι Χαρακτήρες* 22 (ed. *Libanii Opera* vol. 9, 70): *ἀντεγκληματική δὲ ἢς ἐγκαλοῦμενοι ἀντεγκαλούμεν τινι τὸ ἐπιφερόμενον ἡμῖν ἐγκλημα περι-τρέποντες τῷ ἐγκαλοῦντι.*

116 Pseudo-Libanius *Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι Χαρακτήρες* 45 (ed. *Libanii Opera* vol. 9, 72): *μικτὴ δὲ ἦν ἐκ διαφόρων χαρακτήρων συνιστώμεν.*

The paraenetic style is that in which we exhort someone by urging him to pursue something or to avoid something. Paraenesis is divided into two parts, encouragement and dissuasion. Some also call it the advisory style, but do so incorrectly, for paraenesis differs from advice. For paraenesis is hortatory speech that does not admit of a counter-statement, for example, if someone should say that we must honor the divine. For nobody contradicts this exhortation were he not mad to begin with.¹¹⁷

The third type that, given the nature of the work, we encounter more than once is the didactic style: “The didactic style is that in which we teach something to someone.”¹¹⁸

It is precisely the mixture of the latter two types, the paraenetic and the didactic, which is characteristic of Christian rhetoric. Paraenesis is expressed using the devices of protreptic, to choose the right form of life (ἀρετὴ τοῦ βίου) on the basis of the acceptance of true doctrine (ἀλήθεια), to which the διδασκαλία, teaching put into words, is oriented.¹¹⁹ The fact that *Maced* adds a third type to these two, sc. the counteraccusation, is the result of the combativeness with which Gregory in this work articulates his opposition against the impious theorems of the Pneumatomachi, and with which he wishes to confirm his orthodox fellow believers in the truth of their faith, so that they may choose the right way of life. In *Epist* xxiv, addressed to the heretic Heracleianus, Gregory very clearly states on the basis of the baptismal command of Mt 28:19, that accuracy of true doctrine (τὴν <τῶν> δογμάτων ἀκριβείαν) and virtue (τὸ ἡθικὸν μέρος) together determine the way in which orthodox Christians live:

The word of ‘sound faith’ (Tit 1.13, 2.2) conveys its strength in simplicity to those who welcome the God-inspired utterances (cf. 2 Tim 3.16) with a good disposition. It has no need of subtle interpretation to assist its truth, since it is able to be grasped and understood in itself from the primary tradition. We received it from the Lord’s own voice when he imparted

117 Pseudo-Libanius Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι Χαρακτήρες 5 (ed. *Libanii Opera* vol. 9, 68): Παραινετική μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ δι’ ἧς παραινοῦμέν τινι προτρέποντες αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τι ὀρμήσαι ἢ καὶ ἀφέξεσθαι τινος. ἢ παραίνεις δὲ εἰς δύο διαίρεται, εἷς τε προτροπὴν καὶ ἀποτροπὴν. ταύτην δὲ τινες καὶ συμβουλευτικὴν εἶπον οὐκ εὖ, παραίνεις γὰρ συμβουλῆς διαφέρει. παραίνεις μὲν γὰρ ἐστὶ λόγος παραινετικός ἀντίρρησιν οὐκ ἐπιδεχόμενος, οἷον ὡς εἴ τις εἴποι, ὅτι δεῖ τὸ θεῖον τιμᾶν· οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἐναντιοῦται τῇ παραινέσει ταύτῃ μὴ πρότερον μανείς.

118 Pseudo-Libanius, Ἐπιστολιμαῖοι Χαρακτήρες 31 (ed. *Libanii Opera* vol. 9, 70): διδασκαλικὴ δι’ ἧς διδάσκομέν τινα περὶ τινος.

119 CHRISTOPH KLOCK, *Untersuchungen*, 158–160. Klock adds on p. 159: “Christliche Rhetorik ist nach dem Verständnis der Kappadozier ipso facto orthodoxe Rhetorik.”

the mystery of 'salvation in the washing of regeneration' (Tit 3.5). 'Go', he said, 'make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you' (Mt 28.18–20). For by distinguishing two elements in the way of life of Christians, one the moral part and the other the accuracy of the dogmas, he firmly established the saving dogma in the tradition of baptism on the one hand, and commanded that our life be remedied through the keeping of his commandments on the other.¹²⁰

Later in *Epist* XXIV, Gregory again emphasises the close connection between the tradition of the faith, baptism, faith, and adoration:

Hence we are baptized as it has been handed down to us, into *Father and Son and Holy Spirit*, and we believe as we are baptized—for it is fitting that our confession be of one voice with our faith—and we give glory as we believe, for it is not natural that worship make war against faith, but as we believe, so also we give glory.¹²¹

This letter, written around the same time as *Maced*, probably after the Council of Constantinople,¹²² is conspicuous for its equanimity of tone, despite being addressed to a member of the Pneumatomachi.¹²³ Gregory must have believed that this tone used in a letter to a specific addressee might have been effective in drawing this person out of his Pneumatomachian circles, in contrast with the

120 *Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 75,3–17: 'Ο τῆς ὑγιαίνουσας πίστεως λόγος τοῖς εὐγνωμόνως τὰς θεοπνεύστους φωνὰς παραδεχομένοις ἐν τῇ ἀπλότητι τὴν ἰσχὺν ἔχει καὶ οὐδεμιᾶς λόγου περινοίας εἰς παράστασιν τῆς ἀληθείας προσδεῖται, αὐτόθεν ὦν ληπτὸς καὶ σαφὴς ἐκ τῆς πρώτης παραδόσεως, ἣν ἐκ τῆς τοῦ κυρίου φωνῆς παρελάβομεν ἐν τῷ λουτρῷ τῆς παλιγγενεσίας τὸ τῆς σωτηρίας μυστήριον παραδόντος. Πορευθέντες γάρ, φησί, μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, διδάσκοντες τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετείλαμην ὑμῖν· διαιρῶν γάρ εἰς δύο τὴν τῶν Χριστιανῶν πολιτείαν, εἷς τε τὸ ἠθικὸν μέρος καὶ εἰς τὴν (τῶν) δογμάτων ἀκρίβειαν, τὸ μὲν σωτήριον δόγμα ἐν τῇ τοῦ βαπτίσματος παραδόσει κατησφαλίσατο, τὸν δὲ βίον ἡμῶν διὰ τῆς τηρήσεως τῶν ἐντολῶν αὐτοῦ κατορθοῦσθαι κελεύει (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

121 *Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 77,12–17: βαπτιζόμεθα τοίνυν, ὡς παρελάβομεν, εἰς πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν καὶ πνεῦμα ἅγιον· πιστεύομεν δὲ ὡς βαπτιζόμεθα—σύμφωνον γάρ εἶναι προσήκει τῇ ὁμολογίᾳ τὴν πίστιν—· δοξάζομεν δὲ ὡς πιστεύομεν—οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔχει φύσιν μάχεσθαι τῇ πίστει τὴν δόξαν, ἀλλ' εἰς ἃ πιστεύομεν, ταῦτα καὶ δοξάζομεν (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

122 For a discussion of the dating of this letter see p. 98 n. 72.

123 ANNA M. SILVAS, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters*, 190: "From his (sc. Gregory's) overriding concern to include the Holy Spirit as one of the Trinity and his concern to rule out Sabellianism, it may be that Heracleianus is being invited to orthodox faith from Pneumatomachian circles."

general and combative tone that characterises the circular letter *Maced*, which seems intended more for his own supporters.¹²⁴

10.7 *The Rhetorical Power of Questions and Dialogues*

In his letter, Gregory exhorts his readers to do one thing and omit another, and he gives instruction as to the right way of life in combination with accurate beliefs, in a counteraccusation of impiety, flung combatively at opponents who had accused the writer of impiety himself. Given the name of *Maced*, composed after the manner of Pseudo-Libanius's vision of letters as a kind of conversation in writing between two people who are not physically in each other's presence, it contains (rhetorical) questions and short dialogues that add rhetorical power to the text and enliven it.¹²⁵

Throughout most of the work, Gregory refers to his opponents in the third person plural or in the third person singular, as for instance in *Maced* GNO III.I. 91,10–12. This gives the impression that he is addressing not his opponents but another party: his allies. He regularly directs some appeal or question to people in the third person. On a number of occasions he directly addresses his opponents in the singular; he personifies them by a single imaginary opponent and addresses him in the second person singular (*Maced* GNO III.I. 96,23–97,20; 109,28–110,30). Gregory attempts to demonstrate the incoherence of their position by asking his opponents six successive questions, nearly all of which begin with τί (*Maced* GNO III.I. 109,19, twice; 109,20; 109,23; 109,24), and which express Gregory's utter incomprehension of his opponents' way of thinking and behaviour. Then, in GNO III.I. 109,28 he conspicuously switches to the second person singular, choosing a single imaginary opponent to continue the argument with. This quasi-dialogue not only livens up his debate with his opponents, it also underlines the existential importance for the imaginary opponent addressed in the second person singular of adopting the correct stance.

On one or two occasions, Gregory mentions the defence mounted by his opponents, such as in *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,30–98,4. There is a general address in *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,24. At the end of the work, from *Maced* GNO III.I. 114,1 to

124 ANNA M. SILVAS, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters*, 190.

125 The use of dialogic has rhetorical force also in sermons, and can enliven them, as JOHAN LEEMANS, *Style and Meaning in Gregory of Nyssa's Panegyrics on Martyrs*, in: *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 81/1 (2005) 109–129, p. 124, has noted: "It introduces emotion and humour into the sermon, adds to the audience's involvement and brings about an identification of the audience with regard to the characters." Leemans has observed that it offers the preacher the opportunity to introduce a different perspective into the narrative.

the end, GNO III.I. 115,31, Gregory chooses the third person singular to describe the person who renders the Spirit fitting honour.

10.8 *The Rhetoric of the Counteraccusation*

Maced is remarkable for the frequent use that Gregory makes in it of invective, levelled at his opponents in his counteraccusation of impiety.¹²⁶

10.8.1 The Introduction

Even before he mentions the charge made against him and names his opponents, he calls their point of view the rotting gangrene of heresy (ἡ σηπεδονώδης αὕτη τῆς αἱρέσεως γάγγραινα, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,6). Gregory is defending himself against foolish people (τὴν ἀφροσύνην αὐτῶν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,8–9), who are ready to wage war against him (οἱ πρὸς τὸν καθ' ἡμῶν πόλεμον ἔτοιμοι, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,25).

10.8.2 Gregory's First Reply: The Divinity and Full Glory of the Spirit

Make Him Equal in Honour and Dignity to the Father and the Son

With their cobbled-together argumentation (κατασκευάζουσιν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,26) and their incomprehensible reasoning (τίνι λογισμῷ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,29) in respect of their opposition to the glory of the Spirit (τοῖς ἀντιστατοῦσι τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πνεύματος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,12–13), his opponents do not fear the hard verdict of blasphemy against the Spirit (τὸ χαλεπὸν τῆς κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος βλασφημίας κατάκριμα, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,27). Gregory does not offer a defence against their accusation of impiety, but attacks them with his own countercharge: *they* are committing the sin against the Holy Spirit. Repeatedly Gregory censures them for the pettiness of their arguments in respect of professing the glory of the Spirit (*Maced* GNO III.I. 93,18–19; 97,22–24; 100,26–31). With irony that turns into sarcasm, he calls his opponents the wise ones (οἱ σοφοί, *Maced* GNO III.I. 95,22; 99,22, 100,27), who, in their lack of generosity and small-mindedness of thinking, resemble people who violate the most elementary laws of logic in their reasoning (*Maced* GNO III.I. 93,19–24). His tone becomes sharper when he draws a connection between their incoherence and

126 ALESSANDRO CAPONE, Challenging the Heretic: The Preface of Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium* III, in: JOHAN LEEMANS & MATTHIEU CASSIN (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium* III, *Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Leuven, 14–17 September 2010* (VCS 124), Leiden 2014, 512–527, shows that Gregory in his *Eun* II and III describes the dispute with Eunomius as a ferocious ground battle in a wrestling arena, in which Eunomius loses as a result of his own sophisms. Vicious invectives help Gregory in this.

their blasphemy (πάσης ἀτοπίας καὶ βλασφημίας, *Maced GNO III.I.* 94,14; ἡ καταγέλαστον ἐστὶ καὶ ἀσεβὲς ἅμα τὰ τοιαῦτα νοεῖν; *Maced GNO III.I.* 96,18–19); in fact, by allowing inferior and new-fangled assumptions, the blasphemers demonstrate ultimate folly (τῆς ἐσχάτης παραπληξίας, *Maced GNO III.I.* 94,31). They are new dogmatists (οἱ καινοὶ δογματισταί, *Maced GNO III.I.* 95,7–8), who turn all pious thoughts about the Holy Spirit into their opposites (παρατρέψουσι, *Maced GNO III.I.* 95,18), even as they dodge and avoid open impiety. These people assert as a doctrine the idea that the Spirit is of a lower rank (δογματίζουσι, *Maced GNO III.I.* 95,15). It is a sign of their lack of intelligence and their ingratitude that they dare accept degrees of perfection, contrary to the laws of logic, and, in the case of the Spirit, mean-spiritedly withhold from him their gift of honour.

10.8.3 The Second Reply: The Spirit Shares in the Divine Power of Creation

By holding, as they do, that the Spirit as an intermediate figure existed before creation, but was excluded from the creative power of the Father and the Son, they have permitted folly to arise in their hearts, spewing it out and sullying Gregory and his allies' progress of thought with their ideas. To counteract the folly of his opponents, which is a sign of impiety, especially in respect of the Spirit (τῇ γὰρ ἀτοπίᾳ τῶν τὰ τοιαῦτα δογματιζόντων, *Maced GNO III.I.* 98,21–22), Gregory with a certain irony invokes, of all things, the gift of the Spirit (ἡ τοῦ πνεύματος χάρις, *Maced GNO III.I.* 98,21) so that it may be grace to him and his allies in his rebuttal. Gregory challenges his opponents to state what reasons there could be for the Spirit to be prevented from participating in the power of creation. Mentioning possible but ridiculous reasons, he drives the reasoning of his opponents *ad absurdum*. Their inferior, human ideas must be met by a way of thinking that befits the exalted nature of the object of Gregory's enquiry.

10.8.4 The Third Reply: The Spirit Shares in the Divine Glory and Gives of This

Gregory further increases the pressure by stating that his opponents, by diminishing the majesty of the Spirit, make a lie of their name of Christians (ὅτι τοὺς οὕτως ἔχοντας ἐν Χριστιανοῖς ἀριθμεῖν οὐκ ἐμάθομεν, *Maced GNO III.I.* 101,10–11). In their absurdity (ἡ ἀτοπία, *Maced GNO III.I.* 103,23) they fight themselves first (τῶν ἑαυτοῖς μαχομένων, *Maced GNO III.I.* 103,24), by bringing down the Spirit to the level of the subordinate and by stipulating both the Spirit's createdness and his ability to transcend this creation.

10.8.5 The Fourth Reply: The Spirit Deserves Adoration, that is
Supplication for Mercy, with the Father and the Son

By thinking little of the Spirit, the giver of the life that is no longer subject to death, they harm their own life in their ingratitude (οἱ καὶ τῆς ζωῆς ἑαυτῶν ὑβρίζουσι καὶ πολέμοι, *Maced GNO III.I. 106,25–26*) and violate the Spirit; they limit, Gregory's countercharge asserts, their ingratitude not just to one person, but extend their blasphemy to the Father and the Son, demonstrating their evil intentions and their blindness. This ingratitude moves in the opposite direction to the gift of life that flows to those who are worthy from the Father through the Son and the Spirit: from the Spirit, the blasphemy goes through the Son to the God of all things, causing the blasphemer to commit the sin against the Holy Spirit which leads to an irrevocable judgement (Mt 12:31–32), as a result of their blindness (ἡ ματαιότης, *Maced GNO III.I. 107,31*), their pitiful and miserable folly (τῆς ἐλλεινῆς αὐτῶν καὶ ταλαιπώρου παραπληξίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,6*), their lack of understanding (τῶν μὴ συνιέντων, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,7*) and their pride (δι' ὑπερηφανίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,8*). This is the first time that the accusation of pride is made, the cause *and* the effect of this perverted return to God. By placing themselves above the Spirit, they cannot ascend to God, *anabasis*, but only descend into the deepest of the deep. As it turns out, they are enemies of their own life. Gregory accuses his opponents of having new-fangled laws (τῆς καινῆς τούτης νομοθεσίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,7–8*), a logical consequence of the accusation made before (διὰ τί νομοθετοῦσιν ἡμῖν οἱ καινοὶ δογματισταὶ μὴ δεῖν ὁμολογεῖν ἐπ' αὐτοῦ πρὸς πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν τὸ ὁμότιμον; *Maced GNO III.I. 95,7–9*). His opponents fail to recognise the Holy Spirit as the Lord who distributes gifts, and refuse him, who is equal in honour and dignity, the tribute that is due to the Father and the Son, refusing to adore him by addressing supplications to him. In the absurdity of their position, which is based upon new-fangled doctrines, Gregory's opponents deny the familiar creed and resist the Lord Jesus himself and his instruction (νομοθετῶν, *Maced GNO III.I. 112,29*).

10.8.6 The Conclusion: Free Will as Praise and Gift to the
Incomprehensible Greatness of the Triune Godhead, of Whom the
Spirit is Part

Gregory again assails his opponents ferociously in the conclusion. Together they are personified by a person who denies the familiar profession of faith (ἄθετεῖ τὴν ὁμολογίαν, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,30*) and, like the Jew or the Sadducee (see also *Maced GNO III.I. 110,21–23*) unnaturally denies the Son and separates the Spirit from the adoration of God. Anyone who has even rudimentary knowledge of God's immeasurable power and of the feebleness of human power, will condemn the folly of those who begrudge the Spirit worship or adora-

tion. Anyone who underestimates the distance that separates God and human beings, the power of God and that of human beings, is characterised by blind folly. God's immeasurable power (ἡ θεία τε καὶ μακαρία δύναμις, *Maced GNO III.I. 114,31–32*) stands in contrast to feeble human power (οὕτω μικρᾶς καὶ εὐτελοῦς τῆς δυνάμεως, *Maced GNO III.I. 115,6–7*). Blind folly is a euphemism for lack of humility. Gregory's counteraccusation, it transpires, is a charge of blasphemous pride, the very opposite of the right adoration of the Triune Godhead, which is characterised by an awareness of human limitation.

10.9 *Ring Composition and Chiasm*

A first reading and analysis of the work suggest that Gregory's composition is meandering and associative, both as regards form and content. A closer analysis, however, shows how carefully Gregory has structured his work and has imbued even the style with rhetorical force.

In multiple places, Gregory ingeniously constructs his sentences to form an attractive composition with strong rhetorical force. One good example of this is *Maced GNO III.I. 89,21–90,14*: the arbitrariness of the accusers is contrasted with the profession made by Gregory and his allies. This contrast is elaborated and strengthened in a handsomely constructed, very long phrase of 19 lines (*Maced GNO III.I. 89,21–90,14*), in the form of a carefully structured ring composition. A second ring composition can be found in a subsequent passage: the rhetorical question about the connection between divinity and perfection in *Maced GNO III.I. 91,10–12* is nonetheless answered with a clear assertion in *Maced GNO III.I. 92,5–9*. A third ring composition then follows immediately: Gregory returns to the rhetorical question about resisting the glory of the Spirit (*Maced GNO III.I. 92,12–13*) with an expression of rhetorical amazement (*Maced GNO III.I. 92,29–30*): what cobbled-together argumentation would permit his opponents to avoid the profession of the Spirit's worthiness to receive worship? Using a ring composition, Gregory returns to *Maced GNO III.I. 92,13–16*, which deals with the names that follow from the Spirit's divinity, in *Maced GNO III.I. 94,3–7*, where he spells out the logical consequences of the profession that the Spirit is of divine nature. This profession implies all names that point to the transcendent.

In his glowing, hymnic praise of the Spirit in *Maced GNO III.I. 113,8–20*, Gregory uses the carefully constructed rhetorical form of the double chiasm (*chiasmus maior*: *Maced GNO III.I. 113,8–20*; *chiasmus minor*: *Maced GNO III.I. 113,9–14*), within which asyndetic and paratactic cola can be identified. This is an indication that Gregory believed that this hymn of praise of the Holy Spirit was of great importance. The *chiasmus maior* is an image of the entire structure of *Maced*: from the Spirit who reigns with God, through the divine gift, of life

first of all, to the salvific work of the Spirit who revivifies the dead, and brings them to new life with God.¹²⁷

10.10 *For the Benefit of Gregory's Orthodox Fellow Believers*

Gregory uses the form of the counteraccusation not only to formulate the arguments to respond to his opponents' charge, arguments that are expressed using the techniques of forensic rhetoric, but also to develop a theological foundation for the *homotimia* of the Spirit, at the service of the edification of the orthodox believers whose possibly erroneous views must be corrected. This counteraccusation functions as a circular letter through which Gregory exercises his role of *arbiter fidei*, strengthening his orthodox fellow believers in their correct views with regard to the Triune Godhead on the basis of the pneumatology defined by the Council of Constantinople in 381. The counteraccusation results in a profound theology of the adoration of the Triune Godhead. Gregory's opponents function here as a deterrent group with whom his fellow believers' orthodoxy is sharply contrasted, for the building up of a solid identity for these fellow believers.

11 The Composition of *Adversus Macedonianos*

11.1 *The Three ἀκολουθίαι*

The circular letter that is *Maced* has a very particular structure. Its rhetorical structure is determined by Gregory's vision of the unity of divine power (*Maced* GNO III.I. 100,1–3), which expresses itself in three ἀκολουθίαι that give the circular letter its specific structure. The intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία, i.e. the fitting order within the Trinity, is crucial to the composition of *Maced*. There is a sequence and an order among divine persons. The Spirit is the third in the sequence, after the Father and the Son. The intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία is relevant for the distinction between the three divine persons, characterised by their fitting sequence and their eternal connection with each other:

127 HÉLÈNE GRELIER, *L'argumentation de Grégoire de Nysse contre Apollinaire de Laodicée. Étude littéraire et doctrinale de l'Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarium et de l'Ad Theophilum adversus apollinaristas*, Thèse Lyon—Université Lumière 2008, 123–124, regards it as plausible that Gregory consciously used the rhetorical device of the *inclusio* to structure his work *Antirrh.* ROBIN ORTON in his edition *St. Gregory of Nyssa—Anti-Apollinarian Writings*, Washington D.C. 2015, in which he presents his translation, introduction, commentary and annotation, on p. 40 says that the outcome of the *inclusio*, which incidentally he rightly calls a chiasm, was accidental rather than a sign of some structure deliberately contrived by Gregory.

Therefore, in an ordered sequence and connected together, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are always recognized with one another in a perfect Trinity. Before the entire creation, before all the ages, and before every conceivable idea, always the Father is Father, the Son is in the Father, and the Holy Spirit is with the Son.

Maced GNO III.I. 98,28–99,1

In addition to the distinction in persons, it is the ἀκολουθία which distinguishes the three divine persons:

For this reason, apart from the difference in order and in subsistence (κατὰ τάξιν καὶ ὑπόστασιν), we comprehend no variation [among them] in any respect. Instead, while we maintain that it is numbered third in the sequence (τῇ ἀκολουθίᾳ) after Father and Son, and third in the order of the tradition, we confess its inseparable connection in all other respects: in nature, honor, deity, glory, majesty, omnipotence, and in the pious confession.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,19–26

In the order as it is handed down by tradition (τῇ τάξει τῆς παραδόσεως, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,22), the Spirit occupies the third place. However, this sequence as the baptismal command in Scripture (Mt 28:19) has it does not detract in any way from the Spirit's full divinity:

Nor will it suffice for their defense to say that since the Lord handed down to the disciples that the Spirit is third in order, he is *ipso facto* estranged from the appropriate notion of God.

Maced GNO III.I. 92,31–34

This intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία—the Father begets the Son; the Spirit proceeds from the Father (ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12) and receives from the Son who mediates (ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12–13), and is therefore mentioned after the Father and the Son—becomes visible in the ἀκολουθία with which creation is formed: it begins with the Father (ἐκ πατρὸς ἀρχομένην, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,9–10), continues through the mediation of the Son (δι' υἱοῦ προϊούσαν, GNO III.I. 100,10) and is completed in the Spirit (ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ τελειουμένην, GNO III.I. 100,10–11). Gregory's basic premise in relation to the Spirit's creative power is that all creation begins in the will of the Father, as the source of the power, continues through the mediation of the Son as the power, and is completed in the Holy Spirit as the spirit of the power

(*Maced* GNO III.I. 100,1–3). That which connects the three divine persons in the act of creation is the divine power, of which the Father is the source, while the Son is the personification of the Father's power, and the Spirit is the spirit of the power. This basic formula demonstrates that the ἀκολουθία of the Trinity is significant for the creation that comes to completion in the Spirit, from the Father as its source, through the mediation of the Son. The one divine δύναμις becomes an image of the divine Trinity with its own ἀκολουθία.

The ἀκολουθία that is visible in creation is, in turn, reflected in the ἀκολουθία that is visible in the history of salvation, the soteriological ἀκολουθία, and, as God's *exitus* (the Son who goes forth to humankind from the Father and gives it the Spirit), makes the *reditus* of human beings possible. The intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία is once again important when it comes to this *reditus*. It is thanks to the *exitus* of the Son, who comes to humankind from the Father and bestows the Spirit upon it, that human beings can go in the opposite direction: coming in the Spirit to the Son, who brings humankind to the Father. In this case, the ἀκολουθία is the ascending movement to the Father that takes place from the Spirit in whom human beings call Jesus the Lord (1 Cor 12:3):

For just as it is impossible to rise up to the Father unless one is lifted up through the Son, so too one 'cannot say Lord Jesus except in the Holy Spirit'.

Maced GNO III.I. 98,26–28

The mediation by Jesus the Lord as Son raises human beings up to the Father. The Spirit given by Jesus sets in motion the *reditus* of human beings through the Son to the Father, an ascending movement (ἀνελθεῖν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 98,26). Gregory points to the baptismal command of Mt 28:19; the order of Mt 28:19 is crucial for the manner in which salvation comes to humankind:

But since the grace administered through the Son depends upon the unbegotten fount, this is why the account teaches that there must first be faith in the name of the Father who 'gives life to all things' (1 Tim 6:13), as the apostle says, seeing that from him the life-giving grace originates, gushing forth with life as if from a spring through the Only-Begotten Son, who is the true life (cf. Jn 14:6), and is made complete in those who are worthy by the activity of the Spirit. So then, since life comes through baptism, and baptism has its completion in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, what are these people saying when they place no value on the giver of life?

Maced GNO III.I. 106,1–11

The life-creating power of the baptismal water comes to human beings from the Father as if from a source, through the mediation of the Son, due to the activity of the Spirit. The intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία appears here as the soteriological ἀκολουθία.

11.2 *The Three ἀκολουθίαι Determine the Composition*

It is precisely these three ἀκολουθίαι which have just been described, the intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία, the ἀκολουθία in creation, and the soteriological ἀκολουθία with God's *exitus* and the *reditus* of human beings, that structure *Maced*, which thus contains a curious connection between rhetoric and theology.¹²⁸

In *Response 1*—The divinity and the full glory of the Spirit make him equal in honour and dignity to the Father and the Son—Gregory describes the intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία. As the third in the sequence, the Spirit too possesses the divine nature in full, and thus the concepts that befit the divine nature.

In *Response 2*—The Spirit shares in the divine power of creation—the intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία is reflected in the ἀκολουθία in creation. The creation flows from the Father through the mediation of the Son to completion in the Holy Spirit.

In *Response 3*—The Spirit shares in the divine glory and gives of this—the ἀκολουθία in creation is reflected in the soteriological ἀκολουθία with the Spirit's specific role in the ἀκολουθία of the redemption of humankind. In baptism, the Spirit gives human beings the grace of the life that comes from the Father, through the mediation of the Son, and is brought to completion through the activity of the Spirit.

In *Response 4*—The Spirit is deserving of adoration, i.e. supplication for mercy, alongside the Father and the Son—human beings make their *reditus* to God and, by making supplication for mercy, worship the Father and, linked inseparably with him, also the Son and the Spirit.

In *The conclusion*—free will as praise of and offering to the unknowable greatness of the Trinity of whom the Spirit is part—human beings are drawn into divine glory through their praise, by offering their free will as praise and gift to the unknowable greatness of the Trinity of whom the Spirit is part. The

¹²⁸ MARIETTE CANÉVET, *Grégoire de Nysse et l'herméneutique biblique. Étude des rapports entre le langage et la connaissance de Dieu*, Paris 1983, 267–287, shows in her *Théologie et plan des commentaires bibliques: de l'exégèse à la tension vers Dieu*, that for Gregory, the course of the history of creation and of the recreation as it can be deduced from the logical sequence within the text of Scripture, provides the structure for the way his Biblical commentaries such as *Vit Moys* and *Cant* are composed.

Spirit opens the circle of God's glory to human beings and draws them into the circle of God's glory.

11.3 *The Structure of Adversus Macedonianos as Preparation for the Final Doxology*

The three ἀκολουθίαι that have just been mentioned, the intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία, the ἀκολουθία in creation, and the soteriological ἀκολουθία, set in motion the *reditus* of human beings towards the Triune Godhead, thus causing them to be drawn into the circle of God's glory. Drawn into this circle of God's glory, human beings will come, in faith in the one power of God, to thanksgiving, worship, and adoration:

For this reason also, he entrusts his own salvation to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He does not chop up the faith into a multitude of powers and deities, but believes in one power, one goodness, one life-giving power, one deity, one life. In this way, he will offer up thanksgiving for his own life, starting with the Father, grasping the Son along with the Father, and not separating the Spirit from the Only-Begotten. Thus he will render to the God above all with the Only-Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit honor, glory, and worship unto endless ages. Amen.

Maced GNO III.I. 115,22–32

The confirmation of the *homotimia* of the Spirit concludes Gregory's work. His doxology acknowledges the sequence of the intra-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία. The ring is closed. It begins with the Father, it therefore includes the Son with the Father, and does not separate the Spirit from the Only-Begotten Son. The final sentence is significant in its form. Honour, glory and worship are not rendered to the Father *through* the Son *in* the Spirit, but to the Father *together with* the Only-Begotten Son and *with* the Holy Spirit. In this way Gregory follows in the footsteps of his deceased brother Basil, who had defended precisely this form of doxology in his *De Spiritu Sancto*.¹²⁹

129 Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* (I 3,1–6): Προσευχόμενῳ μοί πρώην μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ ἀμφοτέρως τὴν δοξολογίαν ἀποπληροῦντι τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ, νῦν μὲν μετὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ σὺν τῷ Πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ, νῦν δὲ διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι, ἐπέσκηψάν τινες τῶν παρόντων, ξενίζούσαις ἡμᾶς φωναῖς κεχρησθαι λέγοντες, καὶ ἅμα πρὸς ἀλλήλας ὑπεναντίως ἐχούσαις.

12 The Core of *Adversus Macedonianos*

Content and form both reveal the core of this work: the crucial role that the Holy Spirit plays at the intersection between God's *exitus* and the return, *reditus*, which is an ascending movement (*anabasis*) of human beings to the Triune Godhead, to be drawn in the Spirit by the Son into the divine glory of the Father and the Son and the Spirit.

The connection between God and human beings is established through God's power, that is thanks to the Father as source of the power, thanks to the Son as the power, and thanks to the Spirit as the spirit of the power. Inspired by, and creatively extending Paul's statement in 1 Cor 1:24, where Paul calls Christ the power and wisdom of God (Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν), Gregory in this key sentence

—ἀλλὰ πηγὴ μὲν δυνάμεώς ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ, δύναμις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον—

Maced GNO III.1. 100,1–3

shows the Triune Godhead's unity of action, which is visible in God's creative and saving work, as flowing from the immanent connection between the three divine persons. Gregory points to the Holy Spirit as the spirit of the power within the divine δύναμις, so that the Spirit shares fully in the one creative power of God, who is Father and Son *and* Spirit. As kingship personified, the Spirit equally shares in the divine δύναμις that makes the human *reditus* to God possible. In close connection with the Son, as his anointing as king—both within the immanence of the Trinity and in the incarnation—at his baptism in the River Jordan, the Spirit shares in the life-creating power in which Father, Son, *and* Spirit demonstrate the unity of their nature. The *reditus* of human beings to God is made possible through the life-creating power that is active in the baptismal water, giving a life that is no longer subject to death. The activity of the Spirit, his ἐνέργεια, upon the baptismal water and upon the baptizand is an expression of the Trinitarian δύναμις, sign of God's incomprehensible nature. God's nature with his immeasurable δύναμις far surpasses human understanding; only the acts of God that flow from it, his ἐνέργειαι, can be grasped by the human mind. Thanks to the life-creating power of the Trinity which is manifested in baptism, human beings with their faith in and their adoration of the divinity of Father *and* Son *and* Spirit are drawn into the dynamic circle of glory, of which the Spirit is the personification. The glory that human beings render exists in the offering up of their good will, their human and feeble προαίρεσις and the concomitant good deeds that have God as their source, as mirrors of God's immeasurable power.

Gregory parries the accusation of impiety that the Pneumatomachi, who reject the *homotimia* of the Spirit, levelled at him with a countercharge. Only by recognising the *homotimia* of the Spirit can human beings avoid the sin of blasphemy, because in their praise and in their expressions of gratitude for the Spirit's gift of self, they begin with the Father, include the Son, and do not separate the Spirit from the Son.

PART 2

Commentary



Commentary

1 Introduction

1.1 *In the Introduction Gregory Feels Called to Respond in Order to Protect the Healthy Teaching of the Faith and Correct Errant Opinions (GNO III.I. 89,1–15)*

1.1.1 Greek Text

〈ΓΡΗΓΟΡΙΟΥ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ ΝΥΣΣΗΣ〉 ΠΕΡΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΣ ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΚΕΔΟΝΙΑΝΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΟΜΑΧΩΝ

(89,1) Τάχα οὐδὲ ἀποκρίνασθαι προσήκει τοῖς ματαίοις τῶν λόγων· τὸ γὰρ σοφὸν τοῦ Σολομῶντος παράγγελμα πρὸς τοῦτο ἔοικε φέρειν τὸ διακελευόμενον μὴ ἀποκρίνεσθαι ἄφρονι κατὰ τὴν ἀφροσύνην αὐτοῦ. ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ κίνδυνός ἐστι μὴ διὰ (5) τῆς ἡμετέρας σιγῆς κατισχύσῃ τῆς ἀληθείας τὸ ψεῦδος καὶ πολλὴν ἢ σηπεδονώδης αὕτη τῆς αἰρέσεως γάγγραινα νομὴν κατὰ τῆς ἀληθείας λαβοῦσα τὸν ὑγιαίνοντα τῆς πίστεως λόγον διαλωβήσῃται, ἀναγκαῖον ἐφάνη μοι μὴ κατὰ τὴν ἀφροσύνην αὐτῶν ἀποκρίνασθαι τῶν τὰ τοιαῦτα κατὰ τῆς εὐσεβείας (10) προτεινομένων, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ διορθώσει τῶν μοχθηρῶν ὑπολήψεων. καὶ γὰρ τὸ παροιμιώδες παράγγελμα δοκεῖ μοι μὴ σιγῇ, ἀλλὰ διόρθωσιν τῶν ἀφραιόντων παρεγγυᾶν ὥς δεῖν τὰς ἀποκρίσεις μὴ συντρέχειν τῇ ἀφροσύνῃ τῶν ὑπολήψεων, ἀνατρέπειν δὲ μᾶλλον τὰς ἀνοήτους αὐτῶν καὶ ἡπατημένας (15) περὶ τῶν δογμάτων δόξας.

1.1.2 Translation

On the Holy Spirit against the Macedonian Spirit-Fighters

(89,1) When it comes to those whose words are empty, it is perhaps best not to give any answer at all. Solomon's wise instruction seems to lead in this direction, when he bids us "not to answer a fool according to his folly." (Prov 26:4) But there is a danger that, through our silence, falsehood will overpower the truth and, when this rotting gangrene of heresy has spread itself widely against the truth, it will completely wreck the healthy teaching of the faith. It therefore seems to me to be necessary to give an answer, not according to the folly of these men who are making such proposals against piety, but for the correction of their wicked ideas. After all, the Proverb does not seem to me to enjoin silence, but to command correction of fools, since one's answers must not concur with the folly of their ideas, but rather must overturn their thoughtless and errant opinions about the doctrines.

1.1.3 Paraphrase

As keeping silent carries the risk that the healthy teaching of the faith will be mutilated by the disease of heresy, Gregory feels called to respond in order to correct errant opinions about the doctrines.

1.1.4 Sub-questions

Why does Gregory break his silence?

Gregory begins his work on a belligerent note. He immediately sets up a number of rhetorical antitheses. His opponents are without reason and they say things that have no sense or meaning, and that are directed against the true faith. Gregory contrasts this with Solomon's wise counsel (Prov 26:4) not to answer a fool according to his own folly. With this Scriptural quotation, Gregory immediately identifies his own starting point: his fidelity to Scripture. And yet Gregory breaks his silence.¹ He places himself in the role of a physician whose task it is to treat rotting gangrene. In this case, the rotting gangrene is the heresy that would fester on if Gregory were to keep silent for much longer, mutilating the healthy teaching of the faith, so that error appears to be on the verge of vanquishing truth.² By breaking his silence, Gregory is answering Paul's call in his second epistle to Timothy (2 Tim 2:17) to speak the truth plainly and avoid profane and idle arguments. Otherwise, the heretics might advance their godless philosophies further and their doctrine might be fuelled, festering on like gan-

1 WERNER JAEGER, *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre*, 7–8 surmises, somewhat speculatively, that Gregory in breaking his silence triumphed over his own natural modesty and diffidence, which his brother Basil had effusively praised. I think the power of rhetoric plays a more important role. This power of rhetoric is all the greater when we realise that Basil in his *Contra Eunomium* 1 (11,22–25) also quoted this verse from Proverbs, and that Gregory, following in his older brother's footsteps, assumed the task of refuting his opponents despite their empty reasoning. It is striking that Athanasius, in his third letter to Serapion (*Epistula III ad Serapionem* 2,6,26–31) also uses this verse in the context of an argument about the Spirit, but for a different purpose: silence is fitting to become aware of one's own ignorance. MATTHIEU CASIN, *L'Écriture de la controverse chez Grégoire de Nysse. Polémique littéraire et exégèse dans le Contre Eunome*, Paris 2012, 70–71, discusses MACED GNO III.1. 89,1–15 in his chapter *Fausse sagesse et vraie folie*.

2 Gregory uses the word γάγγραινα, gangrene, only once in his writings. It could have been worse, as the works of Galen show, the second-century Roman physician who wrote in Greek: he contrasted an advanced stage, the necrosis of tissue, with γάγγραινα: it is called σφάκελος (*Galenus Opera Omnia*, Leipzig 1821–1833, vol. 18a, 687). The polemical use of medical terminology assists Gregory's rhetoric. Further study of the subject in this work has been omitted here. Gregory's works often testify to their author's substantial knowledge of medicine. Moreover, it was the task of bishops to heal like physicians, and to restore to health what had been injured in matters of the faith, which should be healthy. There is for instance the traditional motif of *Christus medicus*.

grene (καὶ ὁ λόγος αὐτῶν ὡς γάγγραινα νομὴν ἔξει). By using the words γάγγραινα and νομή in his introduction, Gregory places himself under the authority of Paul, who expressed the fear that the heretics might upset other people's faith (2 Tim 2:18). In obedience to Paul, Gregory turns against heresy and the heretics, and also subtly turns the tables on them. In his resistance to the subversions of the heretics, Gregory regards it as his task to engage in some subversion of his own, specifically by overturning the thoughtless and errant opinions about the doctrines which the fools entertain. The letter to Titus, in chapters 1 and 2, similarly contains a contrast between people who speak foolish words, ματαιολόγοι (Tit 1:10, cf. τοῖς ματαίοις τῶν λόγων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,1–2), who turn their backs on the truth (Tit 1:14) and lack the healthy faith,³ and the irreproachable πρεσβύτεροι and ἐπισκόπος who are dedicated to the truth and have been called to proclaim the healthy faith. Complying with Paul's instructions to Timothy and Titus, Gregory engages in a subtle game of opposites: silence and speech, lies and truth, sickness and health, folly and wisdom, godlessness and piety, misleading opinions about the doctrines and the healthy teaching of the faith. This game of opposites allows Gregory to convince his readers, even in the introduction, of the vital importance of the subject of his text.⁴

Does the reference to Prov 26:4 appear in other writings by Gregory?

The reference to Prov 26:4 also occurs in *An et res* GNO III.III. 11,8–12:⁵

She (sc. Macrina) replied: "It is more agreeable to remain silent on such questions and to consider their foolish and irreverent assumptions un-

3 Significantly, the letter to the heretic Heracleianus, *Epist* XXIV, which can be dated around the same time, and which deals with the same topics that *Maced* deals with, begins with 'The word of sound faith': 'Ὁ τῆς ὑγιαίνουσας πίστεως λόγος' (*Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 75,3). It is a paraphrase of the letters to Timothy (1 Tim 1:10, 6:3; 2 Tim 1:13, 4:3) and Titus (Tit 1:9,13 and 2:1,2,8).

4 JOHAN LEEMANS, Communicating Truth in Gregory of Nyssa's Sermons. Preaching Orthodoxy, Constructing Heresy, in: M. LAMBERIGTS, L. BOEVE, T. MERRIGAN, in collaboration with D. CLAES, M. WISSE, *Orthodoxy, Process and Product* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 227), Leuven 2009, 61–83, has demonstrated that Gregory also constructs orthodoxy in his sermons and includes theological arguments for this through attacks on opponents, like the Pneumatomachi, portraying them as dangerous heretics.

5 JEAN DANIELLOU, La chronologie des oeuvres de Grégoire de Nysse, in: *Studia Patristica* 7 (1966) 159–169, p. 163, dates this work to the autumn of 380. GERHARD MAY, Die Chronologie des Lebens und der Werke des Gregor von Nyssa, in: MARGUERITE HARL (ed.), *Écriture et culture philosophique dans la pensée de Grégoire de Nysse. Actes du colloque de Chevetogne (22–26 septembre 1969)*, Leiden 1971, 51–67, p. 57, mentions the year 380 as *terminus post quem*, although the work could be several years younger.

worthy of a response, since the divine words forbid it saying: ‘Answer not a fool according to his folly’. But the fool, according to the prophet (sc. David, Ps LXX 13:1 and 52:2), is ‘the one who says there is no God.’⁶

In this quotation, folly is associated with foolish and godless words. The introduction to *Eust GNO III.I. 4,1–9* also contains the *topos* of an initial resolve to remain silent (σιωπᾶν ὥμην δεῖν, *Eust GNO III.I. 4,3*), which Gregory nonetheless breaks because he feels the physician Eustathius’s words were addressed to him. His silence runs the risk of giving up the truth, thus harming many as the lie would gain the upper hand over the truth (*Eust GNO III.I. 4,6–9*):

You did well however in urging me not to surrender the truth, but to refute the slanderers, lest harm come to many through a triumph of the lie over the truth.⁷

Eust similarly takes a stand against the Pneumatomachi; it was probably written shortly before the Council of 381, most likely in 380 during Gregory’s involuntary sojourn in Sebaste, Armenia.⁸ In the introduction to this work, he praises the physician Eustathius because the latter does not limit himself to healing physical diseases, but also endeavours to cure diseases of the soul, τῶν ψυχικῶν ἀρρωστημάτων ἐπινοῶν τὴν διόρθωσιν (*Eust GNO III.I. 3,10–11*).

In the introduction to his *Epist can*, written in 383 or shortly thereafter, Gregory, among other things, mentions the various sins that can make a soul

6 *An et res GNO III.III. 11,8–12*: Ἡ δὲ, Σιωπᾶν μὲν ἦν, φησὶν, ἐπὶ τοῖς τοιούτοις ἀρμοδιώτερον, μὴ δὲ ἀξιούμην ἀποκρίσεως τὰς μωρὰς τε καὶ ἀσεβεῖς τῶν προτάσεων, ἐπεὶ καὶ τις τῶν θείων ἀπαγορεύει λόγος Μὴ ἀποκρίνεσθαι ἄφρονι κατὰ τὴν ἀφροσύνην αὐτοῦ· ἄφρων δὲ πάντως ἐστί, κατὰ τὸν προφήτην ὁ μὴ εἶναι λέγων θεόν (transl. by VIRGINIA WOODS CALLAHAN).

7 *Eust GNO III.I. 4,6–9*: σὺ δὲ καλῶς ποιῶν μὴ καταπροδιδόναι τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐνεκελεύσω, ἀλλὰ διελέγχειν τοὺς συκοφάντας, ὥς ἂν μὴ πολλοὶ παραβλαβείεν κατευμεροῦντος τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ ψεύδους (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

8 JEAN DANIELOU, La chronologie des oeuvres de Grégoire de Nysse, in: *Studia Patristica* 7 (1966) 159–169, p. 162, dates this work to 375. GERHARD MAY, Die Chronologie des Lebens und der Werke des Gregor von Nyssa, in: MARGUERITE HARL (ed.), *Écriture et culture philosophique dans la pensée de Grégoire de Nysse. Actes du colloque de Chevetogne (22–26 septembre 1969)*, Leiden 1971, 51–67, pp. 57–59, dates it to 380, during Gregory’s sojourn in Sebaste. ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Ad Eustathium De sancta Trinitate*, in: VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS, (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarianism. Proceedings of the nth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Tübingen 17–20 September 2008* (VCS 106), Leiden 2011, 89–109, pp. 91–99, provides further evidence for May’s dating on the basis of a connection between this work and Gregory’s *Epist v*.

ill, including apostasy. Like a skilled doctor who uses therapies that are appropriate to the various diseases, he fights the different forms of sinfulness with different penances that are to be imposed.⁹

Does Gregory's objective, to correct errant opinions, provide information about the historical setting of this work?

It is precisely in the introduction to *Maced* that Gregory mentions the concept of διόρθωσις twice: ἐπὶ διορθώσει τῶν μοχθηρῶν ὑπολήψεων (GNO III.I. 89,10); διορθωσιν τῶν ἀφραινόντων (GNO III.I. 89,12). This is an important clue that he wrote *Maced* in his capacity of *arbiter fidei*, the task with which the Emperor Theodosius charged him in his edict of 30 July 381. Given this context, I would opt for a dating of *Maced* shortly after 30 July 381. See the introductory chapter on the dating of *Maced* (chapter 1, section 9) for further details on this argument.

Who is suffering from the gangrene of this heresy?

Gregory uses harsh words in his introduction. By speaking, he assumes the task of combating the rotting gangrene of the αἵρεσις. It is evident from the passages that follow that he opposes the persons who accuse him and others of impiety because he and his allies have exalted insights about the Holy Spirit: the Spirit is divine. The people who deny this, suffer from the gangrene of this αἵρεσις. At the Council of 381 (Canon 1), the group of the Pneumatomachi was branded as αἵρεσις.¹⁰ The same Canon took the doctrine of the Fathers of Nicaea as its

9 Cf. CHRISTIAN HORNUNG, *Apostasie im antiken Christentum. Studien zum Glaubensabfall in altkirchlicher Theologie, Disziplin und Pastoral* (4.–7. Jahrhundert n. Chr.) (VCS 138), Leiden 2016, 162–166, writes in relation to *Epist can* GNO III.V. 1,20–2,2 (ὥσπερ γὰρ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς σωματικῆς θεραπείας ὁ μὲν σκοπὸς τῆς ἱατρικῆς εἰς ἔστιν, τὸ ὑγιᾶναι τὸν κάμνοντα, τὸ δὲ εἶδος τῆς ἐπιμελείας διάφορον [κατὰ γὰρ τὴν ποικιλίαν τῶν ἀρρωστημάτων καταλλήλως καὶ ἡ θεραπευτικὴ μέθοδος ἐκάστω τῶν νοσημάτων προσάγεται], οὕτω πολλῆς οὕσης καὶ ἐν τῇ ψυχικῇ νόσῳ τῆς τῶν παθῶν ποικιλίας ἀναγκαιῶς πολυειδὴς γενήσεται ἡ θεραπευτικὴ ἐπιμέλεια, πρὸς λόγον τοῦ πάθους ἐνεργοῦσα τὴν ἱάσιν): “Gregor entwirft hier die Vorstellung einer medialen Buße, die die durch die Sünde erkrankte Seele heilen soll. Für die Vergehen setzt er eine je nach Schwere und erwarteter pathologischer Wirkung gestaffelte Bußdauer fest.” Gregory’s vision of penance at various levels is comparable to Basil’s in his *epistulae canonicae* to Amphilochius.

10 Canon 1 of the Council of 381: “Ὁρισαν οἱ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει συνελθόντες ἄγιοι Πατέρες, μὴ ἀθετεῖσθαι τὴν πίστιν τῶν Πατέρων τῶν τριακοσίων δέκα ὁκτώ, τῶν ἐν Νικαίᾳ τῆς Βιθυνίας συνελθόντων· ἀλλὰ μένειν ἐκείνην κυρίαν, καὶ ἀναθεματισθῆναι πᾶσαν αἵρεσιν· καὶ εἰδικῶς τὴν τῶν Εὐνομιανῶν, εἴτ’ οὖν Εὐδοξιανῶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Ἡμιαρείων, εἴτ’ οὖν Πνευματομάχων, καὶ τὴν τῶν Σαβελλιανῶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Μαρκελιανῶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Φωτεινιανῶν, καὶ τὴν τῶν Ἀπολλιναριστῶν.

point of reference. Gregory follows suit. He feels called to overturn thoughtless and errant opinions about the doctrines:

but rather must overturn their thoughtless and errant opinions about the doctrines.

Maced GNO III.I. 89,14–15

Three lines further, he specifies the doctrines in question: what is at stake, he says, are the teachings of the Fathers, the criterion for Gregory's confession of faith when it comes to the Spirit:

all that we confess regarding the Spirit following the teachings of the fathers, they provide themselves with a pretext for accusing us of impiety.

Maced GNO III.I. 89,18–20

Gregory writes in the same vein in *Antirrh*, Gregory's polemical work against Apollinarius of Laodicea, written around the same time as *Maced*.¹¹ In this work, Gregory uses the Church rather than the Fathers. Writing about the doctrines of Nicaea (ἐν τοῖς κατὰ Νίκαιαν δόγμασιν, *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 143,6–7) on Christ's incarnation and becoming man, Gregory says:

Faith teaches of him who 'came down from heaven and was enfleshed'. It knows of no flesh before the 'coming down'; it was after the 'coming down' that we can speak of him who 'was enfleshed and was made man'.¹² This is what is proclaimed by all the churches; this is our teaching, or rather the teaching of the Church.¹³

Yield

In this introduction, Gregory sets the tone for his work: complying with Paul's words to Timothy and Titus, he exercises the task entrusted to him by the Council of 381: to correct errant opinions. He breaks his silence, he speaks, so as to prevent the gangrene of heresy from spreading, lie from triumphing over truth,

11 ROBIN ORTON, *St. Gregory of Nyssa—Anti-Apollinarian Writings, translated, with an introduction, commentary, and notes*, Washington D.C. 2015, 35–38, has proposed a date between 380 and 385.

12 I follow Orton, who rightly argues that the question mark in the GNO text is redundant.

13 *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 143,7–12: τὸν καταβάντα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἡ πίστις λέγει καὶ σαρκωθέντα, ὡς μὴ πρὸ τῆς καθόδου νοεῖσθαι τὴν σάρκα, ἀλλὰ δευτερεύειν μετὰ τὴν κάθοδον τὸν σαρκωθέντα καὶ ἐνανθρωπήσαντα; τοῦτο παρὰ πάντων ἐν ἐκκλησίαις κηρύσσεται καὶ οὗτος ἡμέτερος, μᾶλλον δὲ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ὁ λόγος (transl. by ROBIN ORTON).

and the healthy teaching of the faith from being suppressed. His choice of rhetorical devices and the words he uses—in part technical terms—indicate that he places himself under the authority of Scripture and of the teachings of the Fathers, and that he presents himself as the defender of the true faith against the folly of unwise men who have allowed themselves to be misled in respect of the teachings of the Fathers, and who therefore belong to the category of fools.

2 The Accusation against Gregory

2.1 *Gregory's Opponents Accuse Him of Impiety Because He Accepts the Divine Nature of the Spirit (GNO III.1. 89,16–90,18)*

2.1.1 Greek Text

(89,16) Τί οὖν ἐστὶν ὁ προφέρουσιν ἡμῖν; ἀσεβεῖν αἰτιῶνται τοὺς περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος μεγαλοπρεπεῖς ἔχοντας ὑπολήψεις· καὶ ὅσα τοῖς τῶν πατέρων ἐπόμενοι δόγμασιν ὁμολογοῦμεν περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος, ταῦτα πρὸς τὸ δοκοῦν (89,20) ἐκλαμβάνοντες ἀφορμὴν ἑαυτοῖς παρέχουσι καθ' ἡμῶν εἰς ἀσεβείας γραφὴν. ἡμῶν γὰρ συντετάχθαι τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ υἱῷ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ὁμολογούντων ὡς μηδεμίαν εἶναι παραλλαγὴν ἐν μηδενὶ τῶν εὐσεβῶς περὶ τὴν θεῖαν φύσιν νοουμένων τε καὶ ὀνομαζομένων ἐκτὸς τοῦ καθ' ὑπόστασιν (89,25) ἰδιαζόντως θεωρεῖσθαι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ (90,1) ἐστὶ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστὶ, καθὼς γέγραπται· οὔτε κατὰ τὸ ἀγέννητον τῷ πατρὶ οὔτε κατὰ τὸ μονογενὲς τῷ υἱῷ συνεχόμενον ἀλλὰ τισιν ἐξαιρέτοις ἰδιώμασιν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ θεωρούμενον ἐν τοῖς ἄλλοις πᾶσι καθάπερ ἔφην τὸ συνημμένον καὶ (90,5) ἀπαράλλακτον ἔχειν ὁμολογούντων· οἱ ὑπεναντίοι φασὶν ἀπεξενώσθαι μὲν αὐτὸ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τῆς φυσικῆς κοινωνίας καὶ διὰ τὴς φύσεως διαλλάττον ὑποβεβηκέναι καὶ ἡλαττώσθαι τοῖς πᾶσιν ἐν δυνάμει καὶ δόξῃ καὶ ἀξιώματι καὶ πᾶσιν ἅπαξ τοῖς θεοπρεπῶς λεγομένοις (90,10) ὀνόμασι τε καὶ νοήμασι· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο δόξης μὲν ἀμέτοχον, ἀνάξιον δὲ τῆς πρὸς τὸν πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν ὁμοτιμίας φασὶν· δυνάμει δὲ τοσοῦτον μετέχειν, ὅσον ἐπαρκεῖν αὐτῷ πρὸς ἀποτεταγμένας τιὰς καὶ μερικὰς ἐνεργείας, τῆς δὲ δημιουργικῆς ἰσχύος ἕξω παντάπασιν καθεστάναι. ταύτης δὲ κρατοῦ-(90,15)σης παρ' αὐτοῖς τῆς ὑπολήψεως ἐκ τοῦ ἀκολούθου κατασκευάζεται παρ' αὐτῶν τὸ μηδὲν ἔχειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὸ πνεῦμα τῶν περὶ τὴν θεῖαν φύσιν εὐσεβῶς λεγομένων τε καὶ νοουμένων.

2.1.2 Translation

(89,16) So then, what do they allege against us? They charge that, with respect to the Holy Spirit, those who hold ideas worthy of its grandeur are impious. By seizing, as they see fit, upon all that we confess regarding the Spirit following the teachings of the fathers, they provide themselves with a pretext for accusing

us of impiety. For we confess that the Holy Spirit is ranked with the Father and the Son, since there is no divergence at all with respect to any of the names that are piously thought and named in connection with the divine nature, with the exception of what the Holy Spirit is specifically considered in reference to his subsistence, namely, that it is “from God” (1 Cor 2:12) and (90) “of Christ” (Rom 8:9), as it is written. It is confused neither with the Father in being unbegotten nor with the Son in being Only-Begotten. Rather, it is considered on its own by certain special distinguishing features, while in all other respects we confess, as I said, that it remains connected and indistinguishable. Our opponents claim that it is estranged from communion of nature with the Father and the Son and that, because of the difference of its nature, it is inferior and lesser in all ways: in power, glory, dignity, and, in sum, in all the names and concepts that are said in a way appropriate to God. And for this reason, they say that it does not share in the glory and is unworthy of equal honor with the Father and Son. But it partakes of as much power as it needs for certain delegated and limited activities and in every way has been placed outside of the power to create. Once this idea has taken hold among them, they set it up as a consequence that, in itself, the Spirit has none of the names that are piously said and thought about the divine nature.

2.1.3 Paraphrase

Gregory’s opponents accuse him of impiety because he believes, in accordance with the teachings of the Fathers, that the Spirit in his uniqueness participates fully in the divine nature. They place the Spirit, in respect of his nature, outside the communion with the Father and the Son, and outside the power to create, and therefore believe the Spirit is not worthy of the equal honour that the Father and the Son equally deserve.

2.1.4 Sub-questions

What do Gregory’s opponents accuse him and his allies of?

In rhetorical fashion, Gregory begins his discussion of the senseless and misleading opinions of his opponents: he starts by asking a question: “So then, what do they allege against us?” He uses the word *προφέρουσιν*. Given the context, *Τί* can be understood as *Τί ἔγκλημα* (“Which charge do they allege against us?”), in the legal sense.¹⁴ Gregory’s response to the accusation begins in *Maced*

14 *Lexicon Gregorianum* III, col. 13b, s.v. *ἐγκλημα*, demonstrates the connection between *ἐγκλημα* and *προφέρειν*. Cf. *Eust GNO III.1*. 5,16–17: ἀλλὰ καινοτομίαν ἡμῖν προφέρουσιν, οὕτως τὸ ἐγκλημα καθ’ ἡμῶν συντιθέντες.

GNO III.I. 90,19 with a new question: “What, then, is our plea?” The accusation is that of impiety. After the prominent place of ἀσεβεῖν in *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,16:

They charge that, with respect to the Holy Spirit, those who hold ideas worthy of its grandeur are impious.

impiety is mentioned once again in *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,20–21, this time in combination with γραφή, a legal term: *an accusation of impiety against us* (καθ’ ἡμῶν εἰς ἀσεβείας γραφήν). The connection with 2 Timothy (verses 16 and 17) which was identified before is present again in this passage: the heretics whose doctrine will spread like gangrene are advancing their impiety even further. Gregory again effects a subtle reversal: he and his allies are being accused of impiety, and this for having exalted insights (μεγαλοπρεπεῖς ὑπολήψεις, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,17–18) about the Holy Spirit. It is only at this point that it is made clear that the Spirit is the point of contention. What these exalted insights are, is explained in *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,13–16:

Now, if it (sc. the Spirit) is divine, then certainly it is also good, powerful, wise, glorious, eternal, and all such names that lift our thoughts (τὰς ὑπολήψεις ἡμῶν) to a level appropriate to its grandeur (πρὸς τὸ μεγαλοπρεπές).

The theme of the μεγαλοπρέπεια of the Spirit returns a number of times in the continuation of the text: *Maced* GNO III.I. 94,4; 100,24; 103,30; 109,2; 114,16, and of God in 96,30 (quotation from Scripture); 107,30; 112,19; 114,26. The accusation of Gregory’s opponents is directed at those who confess the orthodox faith about the Spirit: τοῖς τῶν πατέρων ἐπόμενοι δόγμασιν ὁμολογοῦμεν περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,18–19.

What separates Gregory and his opponents?

The opponents’ *saying, charging*, is contrasted with the *confessing* that ‘we’ do; this confession continues up to *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,5, followed by the opinions, the arguments of the opponents up to *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,19, where a new part of the work begins.

Against the opponents (*Maced* GNO III.I. 90,5) who *say* that the Spirit is subordinate (οἱ ὑπεναντίοι φασίν), we *confess* (ἡμῶν ... ὁμολογούντων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,21–22), Gregory says, that the Spirit is of equal rank as the Father and the Son (συντετάχθαι, cf. *Maced* GNO III.I. 104,31 and 102,26). This is the first indication that for Gregory, the Spirit is on the side of the Father and the Son, and that the *diastema* separates the Spirit from creatures.

What indication is there that his opponents are enemies of the glory of the Spirit? Eust GNO III.I. 5,16–19 similarly has the combination of a accusation made by Gregory's opponents, *προφέρουσιν* (sc. τὸ ἔγκλημα) followed by *αἰτιῶνται*, and Gregory's confession, *ὁμολογούντας*, of the one Godhead and three hypostases. Gregory contends that the criterion must be the Scriptures that are inspired by God, and the teachings, τὰ δόγματα, that are in accord with God's words. Gregory's opponents have made their accusation of impiety because they interpret according to their whim (πρὸς τὸ δοκοῦν ἐκλαμβάνοντες) what Gregory and his allies confess in accordance with the teachings of the Fathers. This is a serious allegation against the Pneumatomachi, because their arbitrary interpretations of the orthodox faith have caused them to make accusations of impiety against those who confess the same orthodox faith.

The same allegation of arbitrary interpretations by heretics can be found in *Tunc et ipse* GNO III.II. 4,5, in respect of the heretical reading of 1 Cor 15:28 (the Son who will subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him). The heretics either misunderstand the Apostle Paul's mysterious thoughts, or interpret them arbitrarily. In this passage, Gregory adds that the arbitrariness of the heretics is a result of their wickedness (*Tunc et ipse* GNO III.II. 4,5): κακούργως πρὸς τὸ δοκοῦν ἐκλαμβάνοντες, i.e. τὰ μυστηριώδη τοῦ ἀποστόλου νοήματα.

In his sermo *Pent* of 388, Gregory refers to Heb 3:7–11, which he believed had been written by Paul. In this part of Hebrews, Paul quotes words from Ps LXX 94:7–11 which he ascribes to the Holy Spirit (Διό, καθὼς λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, Heb3:7a):

at the time of testing in the desert, when your ancestors challenged me, and put me to the test, and saw my works, for forty years.¹⁵

In Ps LXX 77:56, David says that the one who was tested in the desert is the highest God: καὶ ἐπείρασεν καὶ παρεπύκρναν τὸν θεὸν τὸν ὕψιστον. This is irrefutable proof from Scripture, provided by David and Paul together, of the divinity of the Spirit, Gregory concludes.¹⁶ Using Heb 3:7–10, Gregory gives a liturgical-

15 Heb 3:8b–10a: κατὰ τὴν ἡμέραν τοῦ πειρασμοῦ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, οὗ ἐπείρασεν οἱ πατέρες ὑμῶν ἐν δοκιμασίᾳ καὶ εἶδον τὰ ἔργα μου τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη.

16 JOHAN LEEMANS, *Bible, Rhetoric and Theology. Some Examples of Mystagogical Strategies in St. Gregory of Nyssa's Sermons*, in: PAUL VAN GEEST (ed.), *Seeing through the Eyes of Faith. New Approaches to the Mystagogy of the Church Fathers*, Leuven 2016, 105–123, p. 112, rightly comments on *Pent*: "It is striking that Gregory does not hesitate to expose his audience to relatively intricate theological arguments and that he attaches great value to the correctness of doctrine. Apparently belief in the doctrinally correct triune God was also an essential part of what he wanted to communicate to his audience. Something he

spiritual¹⁷ interpretation of Psalm LXX 94, and he calls on his congregation on the feast of Pentecost to be like a choir and to

obey the choir leader of that choir of the Spirit, David, who exclaims (Ps LXX 94:1): ‘Come, let us rejoice before the Lord.’ And the Lord is the Spirit, as the Apostle says (2 Cor 3:17).¹⁸

The Pneumatomachi can conclude that David and Paul witness to the divinity of the Holy Spirit, so that the mouths of the Pneumatomachi are silenced when they speak their injustice to the detriment of God. They are enemies of the glory of the Spirit (οἱ ἐχθροὶ τῆς δόξης τοῦ πνευμάτος, *Pent GNO X.II*. 291,13–14).¹⁹ The Pneumatomachi are not filled with the Spirit and therefore engage in false interpretation of Scripture. The new, sweet wine of Christ, which is his blood, does not tolerate the addition of their heretical water (τοῦ αἱρετικοῦ ὕδατος, *Pent GNO X.II*. 291,24). They carry the new wine in their old wineskin, which breaks as a result of their heresy (αἱρετικῶς ἀπορρήγνυται, *Pent GNO X.II*. 292,3).

What does the previous conflict between Gregory and Eunomius about the position of the Spirit tell us about Maced?

Gregory says in *Eun I GNO I*. 74,5–10 that it seems as if Eunomius is rewriting Mt 28:19, as he does not mention the Father and the Son and the Spirit by their names, but, in the case of the Spirit, speaks of the being that is not of equal rank with either of the other beings (sc. the being that is the highest, and the being that has its being from the highest being), but is subordinate to both beings: τὴν μηδεμίᾳ τούτων συνταττομένην ἀμφοτέραις δὲ ὑποτεταγμένην, *Eun I GNO I*. 74,9–10.²⁰

even did with some vehemence: the end of the sermon is a strongly polemical passage in which he expresses the hope that the Pneumatomachians will turn away from heresy and find their way back again. This polemic may be considered as the other side of his mystagogic fervour.”

17 JOCHEN REXER, *Die Festtheologie Gregors von Nyssa. Ein Beispiel der Reichskirchlichen Heortologie* (Patrologia VIII), Frankfurt 2002, 204–205.

18 *Pent GNO X.II*. 288, 23–26: πείθεσθαι τῷ κορυφαίῳ τῆς πνευματικῆς χοροστασίας Δαβὶδ τῷ λέγοντι· Δεῦτε, ἀγαλλιασώμεθα τῷ κυρίῳ· Ὁ δὲ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι, καθὼς φησιν ὁ ἀπόστολος.

19 Curiously, Gregory does not use Heb 3:7–11 and the quotation in that passage of Ps LXX 77:56 in *Maced*.

20 FRIEDHELM MANN, Das Vokabular des Eunomios im Kontext Gregors, in: MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium I—An English Translation with Supporting Studies* (VCS 148), Leiden 2018, (199–222) 210–212, contrasts Gregory’s συντάττω (“der Zusammenordnung, der Einbeziehung des Geistes in die Einheit von Vater und Sohn”) with Eunomius’s ὑποτάττω (“die ‘Unterordnung’ der dritten Wesenheit”).

Starting in *Eun I GNO I*. 82,15ff., Gregory examines Eunomius's arguments for the subordination of the Spirit to the Son and the Father, in view also of his manner of reading and interpreting Scripture. Gregory contrasts his own faithful interpretation of Scripture with Eunomius's blasphemies, and demonstrates that the Spirit is not subordinate to the Father and the Son. Much less is the Son subordinate to the Father.²¹

In *Eun I GNO I*. 84,10–86,16, Gregory rejects Eunomius's argument that the sequence in the enumeration of Mt 28:19 is proof of the Spirit's lower nature. The Lord himself (sc. the Son) places the Spirit on the same level as the Father and the Son (τὸ συντεταγμένον ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦ κυρίου πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ, *GNO I*. 86,9–10), while, by contrast, Eunomius counts the Spirit among that which is subordinate (ἐν τοῖς ὑποτεταγμένοις, *GNO I*. 86,11–12), because for him, the Spirit is the work of the Father and the Son, as the Father provided cause for the creation of the Spirit and the Only-Begotten One created the hypostasis of the Spirit. This leads Eunomius to regard the Spirit as subordinate (τῆς ὑποταγῆς, *GNO I*. 86,15).

A similar position can be found in *Eun I GNO I*. 120,4–12: the enemies of the truth bring the Spirit down to the level of creation. It is as if they have not heard that God the Logos, when he entrusted the mystery of the knowledge of God to his disciples, told them that those who are born again receive the fullness of life in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mt 28:19). The Logos safeguards the Spirit from the suspicion that he belongs to the realm of creation by aligning him with the Father and with himself (διὰ τοῦ συντάξαι τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ἑαυτῷ, *Eun I GNO I*. 120,11). In *Eun I GNO I*. 120,15–17, Gregory repeats this point, with a minor variation. The Lord (sc. the Logos) places the Holy Spirit on the same level as the Father and himself (τοῦ δε κυρίου ... τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ἑαυτῷ συναρμόσαντος).

The passages from *Eun* which we have just discussed show that Gregory, in his conflict with Eunomius about the position of the Son with respect to the Father, regards the position of the Spirit as essential. We may assume that Gregory viewed his work *Maced* as a logical sequel to his works against Eunomius. In the light of what happened in the year 381 and in the following years, he will have seen the heresy, the *hairesis* of the Pneumatomachi as the rotten fruit of Eunomius's reflections.²² Just as Gregory of Nazianzus held his five theolo-

21 The interpretation of 1Cor 15:28 played an important role in the conflict between the Arians and the Orthodox on the relationship between the Son and the Father. In his dogmatic treatise *Tunc et ipse* from the second part of the 380s, Gregory gives a non-subordinationist exegesis of this Bible verse.

22 ELIAS D. MOUTSOULAS, La pneumatologie du *Contra Eunomium* 1, in: MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium 1—An English Translation with Sup-*

gical orations on the Trinity, in which he defended the full divinity of both the Son and the Spirit, Gregory of Nyssa will have regarded his works against Eunomius and his defence of the divinity of the Spirit as part of a whole.

What is Gregory's first response to the accusation of impiety?

Gregory immediately meets the accusation of impiety (ἀσεβείας γραφήν, *Maced GNO III.I*. 89,21) by contrasting it with his own εὐσέβεια, which includes both piety and orthodoxy.²³ The thoughts he has and the words he speaks about the divine nature are limited on the basis of his εὐσέβεια. This limitation is the very proof of his piety, i.e. of his orthodox faith. Given his confession that the Spirit is of the same rank as the Father and the Son, there is in what Gregory piously thinks about the divine nature and expresses about this in words no

porting *Studies* (VCS 148), Leiden 2018, p. 557, contends that Gregory's pneumatology is developed in a more analytical way in *Eun I* than it is in his other works: "Ce qui est remarquable chez lui c'est l'utilisation plus large de la pensée philosophique et en même temps la considération de la révélation comme première source de la vérité." (p. 566). RICHARD PAUL VAGGIONE, *Eunomius The Extant Works. Text and Translation by Richard Paul Vaggione*, Oxford 1987, presents the fragments of Eunomius's writings that can be collected from his opponents. GIULIO MASPERO, Trinitarian Theology in Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium I: The Interplay between Ontology and Scripture*, in: MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium I—An English Translation with Supporting Studies* (VCS 148), Leiden 2018, 441–493, has shown the importance that Gregory attaches in *Eun I* to the use of the names of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, names which indicate their mutual relationship and help to define the personal characteristics of the divine persons: "the height of his confutation, and indeed of the whole work"; "It is precisely through a reflection on his (sc. the Spirit) person that the strongest argument against Eunomius emerges." (p. 492). Maspero has rightly added: "The fruit of such theology is later taken up by the Council of Constantinople and remains a precious treasure in the Church that adores the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS, Divine Attributes and God's Unity in the *Contra Eunomium I* of Gregory of Nyssa, in MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium I—An English Translation with Supporting Studies* (VCS 148), Leiden 2018, 412–440, pp. 434–437, has also demonstrated the importance that Gregory gives to the specific meaning of the names Father and Son as used in Scripture, the ἔμφασις; they indicate the essential unity of the divine persons as well as their distinction, although divine fatherhood and divine sonship transcend the human understanding of fatherhood and sonship.

- 23 JAVIER IBAÑEZ & FERNANDO MENDOZA, *Naturaleza de la "Eusebeia" en Gregorio de Nisa*, in: HEINRICH DÖRRIE & MARGARETE ALTENBURGER & UTA SCHRAM (ed.), *Gregor von Nyssa und die Philosophie. Zweites Internationales Kolloquium über Gregor von Nyssa, Freckenhorst bei Münster, 18.–23. September 1972*, Leiden 1976, 261–277, have provided an extensive analysis of the concept of εὐσέβεια in Gregory. They have categorised the use of εὐσεβῶς in *Maced GNO III.I*. 89,23 and in *Eun II GNO I*. 270,29 under εὐσέβεια as "fe y doctrina ortodoxa" (p. 271, n. 28).

other distinction between the Spirit on the one hand and the Father and the Son on the other, than that the Spirit is regarded in his uniqueness, according to his own existence. Up to what point are thoughts and words about the divine nature appropriate, up to what point do they comply with the requirement of εὐσέβεια? Gregory provides an explanation of this in his disputation with Eunomius. In *Eun II GNO I*. 270,26–271,2, on the possibilities and impossibilities of human language, Gregory distinguishes clearly between naming God's nature (which human beings cannot do), and naming God's activities that give us some understanding of God's hidden nature. Limiting oneself to naming God's activities that give us some understanding of God's nature is testimony to εὐσέβεια. Gregory states that human beings are unable to add any honour to the divine nature, because this nature is ineffable and precedes all human ideas of God, and because it can only be known through God's activities. If we make statements on the basis of God's activities, the fact that we name these activities with honour does not add any honour to God's nature, but it does guide us towards understanding of things that are hidden:

We do indeed reckon that to add any honour to the divine Nature, which transcends every honour, is more than human weakness can manage, but we do not refuse to try to make something known about him through words and titles reverently (εὐσεβῶς) conceived. For this reason, so far as we are able, in pursuing what is reverent (τὸ εὐσεβὲς ἰχνεύοντες) we apprehend that the first Cause has his existence from no superior cause.²⁴

On what grounds does Gregory regard the Spirit according to his own existence in his uniqueness?

Immediately afterwards, Gregory expresses his conviction that the Holy Spirit must be seen according to his own existence, in his uniqueness. Gregory bases this conviction on Scripture. The Spirit is from God and of Christ, as it says in Scripture (καθὼς γέγραπται), in Jn 15:26, Gal 4:6 and Rom 8:9 respectively.²⁵

24 *Eun II GNO I*. 270,26–271,2: ἡμεῖς δὲ προσθεῖναι μὲν τινα τῇ θεῇ φύσει τιμὴν τῇ ὑπὲρ πάσαν οὔσῃ τιμὴν μείζον ἢ κατὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην οἰόμεθα, γνωρίσαι δέ τι τῶν περὶ αὐτὴν διὰ τῶν εὐσεβῶς ἐπινοουμένων ῥημάτων τε καὶ ὀνομάτων ἐπιχειρεῖν οὐκ ἀρνούμεθα. καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καθ' ὅσον δυνατὸν ἡμῖν τὸ εὐσεβὲς ἰχνεύοντες τὸ μὴ ἐξ αἰτίας ὑπερκειμένης τὸ πρῶτον αἴτιον τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἔχειν καταλαμβάνομεν (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

25 A meticulous analysis of Gregory's use of Jn 15:26 in *Maced* and in other works by Gregory can be found in MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS BRUFAU, *El Espíritu Santo: De la divinidad a la procesión. El desarrollo pneumatológico en los escritos dogmáticos de los tres grandes capadocios*, Pamplona 2012, 234–242. In addition to the use of this Scriptural verse in *Maced*, Brugarolas discusses references to it in *Abl GNO III I*. 55,21–56,10 and *Or dom III* (SC 422,1–

The Spirit is regarded in his uniqueness on the basis of certain specific characteristics (τισιν ἐξαίρετοις ιδιώμασιν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,3) and is not interwoven with and is distinct from the Father in his being unbegotten (τὸ ἀγέννητον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,1–2), and from the Son in his being only-begotten (τὸ μονογενὲς, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,2). It also belongs to the orthodox confession that the Spirit is united with the Father and the Son without distinction in relation to everything else (τὸ συνημμένον καὶ παράλλακτον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,4–5). Gregory does not (yet) clarify what these certain specific characteristics are. *Eun* I GNO I. 107,17–108,13 contains an illuminating comparable position:²⁶

Rather, being thought of as in utter perfection and incomprehensible transcendence, it possesses unconfused and clear differentiation through the characteristics to be found in each of the persons (*hypostases*), being exactly the same (τὸ παράλλακτον, GNO I. 107,21) inasmuch as they are uncreated, and singular in the special characteristics of each. The particularity attributed to each of the persons (*hypostases*) plainly and unambiguously distinguishes them from each other. Thus the Father is confessed to be uncreated and unbegotten, for he is neither begotten nor created. This being uncreated therefore he has in common with the Son and the Holy Spirit. But he is both unbegotten and Father; this is personal and incommunicable, and it is not perceived in either of the others. The Son is connected to the Father and the Spirit in being uncreated, but has his individuation in being, and being called, Son and Onlybegotten, which does not belong to the God over all or to the Spirit. The Holy Spirit, who has a share with the Father and the Son in the uncreated nature, is again

426,5; GNO VII.II. 42,14–43,15). He deals with the use of Jn 15:26 in *Epistula* 38 in a separate section. The question whether the author of this letter was Basil or Gregory appears to be settled in favour of Gregory on the basis of a combination of philology and mathematical techniques, see DARIO BENEDETTO & MIRKO DEGLI ESPOSTI & GIULIO MASPERO, The Puzzle of Basil's *Epistula* 38: A Mathematical Approach to a Philological Problem, in: *Journal of Quantitative Linguistics* 20 (2013) 267–287. Brugarolas has concluded on the basis of Gregory's use of Jn 15:26, in combination with that of Rom 8:9, that Gregory succeeded in establishing a *proprium* for the Spirit. See also the commentary on *Maced* GNO III.I. 96,23–97,20 on the *processio* of the Spirit.

26 HERMAN JOSEF SIEBENSJ, *Basilius van Cäsarea, De Spiritu Sancto. Über den Heiligen Geist, übersetzt und eingeleitet* (Fontes Christiani, 12), Freiburg 1993, 53, has observed in relation to this *locus*: "Aber wenn es darum geht, die Eigenart des Geistes innerhalb der Trinität zu bestimmen, bleibt Gregor von Nyssas Auskunft genauso zurückhaltend oder negativ wie die der beiden anderen Kappadozier."

distinguished from them by recognisable features. His feature and mark is quite uniquely to be none of those things which reason envisaged as peculiar to the Father and the Son. To be neither unbegotten nor only-begotten, but to be in the mode of constituting a whole (εἶναι δὲ ὅλως),²⁷ provides his special personal difference (sc. his *proprium*) from the others mentioned.²⁸

In *Or dom* III, Gregory demonstrates on the basis of Jn 15:26 and several other Scriptural passages that Scripture defines the *proprium* of the Son and of the Spirit in contradistinction to the *proprium* of the Father: *it is the proprium of the Father that he is without cause* ("Ἰδιον τοῦ πατρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐξ αἰτίου εἶναι, *Or dom* SC 422,1; GNO VII.II. 42,14); the Son and the Spirit have a common characteristic, which is that they have their origin (τὸ ἐξ αἰτίας εἶναι, *Or dom* SC 422,6–7; GNO VII.II. 42,20); the Father as cause. The Son's own uniqueness is that he proceeded from the Father and is therefore called Only-Begotten ("Ὁ τε γὰρ υἱὸς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐξῆλθεν, *Or dom* SC 422,2–3; GNO VII.II. 42,15–16; 'Ὁ γὰρ μονογενὴς υἱὸς ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς παρὰ τῆς ἀγίας γραφῆς ὀνομάζεται, *Or dom* SC 422,13–14; GNO VII.II. 42,26–27). The Spirit's unique characteristic is that *he proceeds from God and from the Father* (καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται, *Or dom* SC 422,3–4; GNO VII.II. 42,16–17) and that he is from the Son:

27 I have adapted the translation of εἶναι δὲ ὅλως (*Eun* I GNO I. 108,12). STUART GEORGE HALL translates εἶναι δὲ ὅλως as "but certainly to be". This is a questionable locus. I have followed GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 251: "to be in the mode of constituting a whole". In n. 68 on p. 251, Maspero refers to ANATOLE BAILLY, *Dictionnaire Grec-Français*. Rédigé avec le concours de E. EGGER, édition revue par L. SÉCHAN & P. CHANTRAINE, Paris 2000, 1370, s.v. ὅλως.

28 *Eun* I GNO I. 107,17–108,13; ἀλλ' ἐν ἁκρῇ τῇ τελειότητι καὶ ἐν ἀκαταλήπτῳ τῇ ὑπεροχῇ θεωρουμένη, τοῖς ἐνυπάρχουσιν ἐκάστη τῶν ὑποστάσεων ἰδιώμασιν ἀσύγχυτον καὶ διακεκριμένην τὴν διαφορὰν ἔχει, ἐν μὲν τῇ κατὰ τὸ ἄκτιστον κοινωνίᾳ τὸ ἀπαράλλακτον ἔχουσα, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἐξαιρέτοις τῶν ἰδιωμάτων ἐκάστου τὸ ἀκοινωνητον. Ἡ γὰρ ἐπιθεωρουμένη ἐκάστη τῶν ὑποστάσεων ἰδιότης τρανῶς καὶ καθαρῶς τὸ ἕτερον ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐτέρου διίστησιν. οἷον ὁ πατὴρ ἄκτιστος εἶναι ὁμολογεῖται καὶ ἀγέννητος· οὔτε γὰρ γεγέννηται οὔτε ἔκτισται· τοῦτο οὖν τὸ ἄκτιστον κοινὸν αὐτῷ πρὸς τὸν υἱὸν ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀγέννητος καὶ πατὴρ· τοῦτο ἰδιὸν τε καὶ ἀκοινωνητον, ὅπερ ἐν οὐδενὶ τῶν ὑπολοίπων καταλαμβάνεται. ὁ δὲ υἱὸς κατὰ τὸ ἄκτιστον τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ πνεύματι συναπτόμενος ἐν τῷ υἱὸς καὶ μονογενὴς εἶναι τε καὶ ὀνομάζεσθαι τὸ ἰδιῶδες ἔχει, ὅπερ οὔτε τοῦ ἐπὶ πάντων θεοῦ οὔτε τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου ἐστὶ. τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐν τῷ ἄκτιστῳ τῆς φύσεως τὴν κοινωνίαν ἔχον πρὸς υἱὸν καὶ πατέρα τοῖς ἰδίοις πάλιν γνωρίσμασιν ἀπ' αὐτῶν διακρίνεται. γνώρισμα γὰρ αὐτοῦ καὶ σημεῖόν ἐστιν ἰδιαίτατον τὸ μὴ δὲν ἐκείνων εἶναι, ἅπερ ἰδίως τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ υἱῷ ὁ λόγος ἐνεθεώρησε. τὸ γὰρ μῆτε ἀγεννήτως εἶναι μῆτε μονογενῶς, εἶναι δὲ ὅλως, τὴν ἐξαίρετον αὐτοῦ ἰδιότητα πρὸς τὰ προειρημένα παρίστησιν (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

But the Holy Spirit too is said to be ‘from the Father’ and testimony is given to its being ‘from the Son’.²⁹

What do Gregory’s opponents claim about the Spirit?

Gregory provides a summary of his opponents’ views in *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,5–14.³⁰ Gregory’s opponents claim that there is a distinction in nature between the Father and the Son on the one hand and the Spirit on the other. As regards his nature, he stands outside the communion with the Father and the Son (ἀπεξενώσθαι, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,6). The Spirit is subordinate to them, and stands wholly outside the power to create (δημιουργικῆς ἰσχύος ἔξω, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,13–14) that the Father and the Son have, and he is therefore not deserving of the same honour as the Father and the Son (ἀνάξιον δὲ τῆς πρὸς τὸν πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν ὁμοτιμίας, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,11). The Spirit shares in the power of God only for certain, partial activities (ἀποτεταγμένως τινὰς καὶ μερικὰς ἐνεργείας, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,13). This leads Gregory’s opponents to the conclusion that he does not have a part in the divine nature and its associated characteristics: the Spirit is of lower rank and is less than the Father and the Son:

in all ways: in power, glory, dignity, and, in sum, in all the names and concepts that are said in a way appropriate to God.

Maced GNO III.I. 90, 8–10

29 *Or dom* III (SC 424,1–2): τὸ δὲ ἅγιον πνεῦμα καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς λέγεται καὶ ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ εἶναι προσμαρτυρεῖται (transl. by ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ). GNO VII.II. 43,1–2 has τὸ δὲ ἅγιον πνεῦμα καὶ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς λέγεται καὶ [ἐκ] τοῦ υἱοῦ εἶναι προσμαρτυρεῖται. I have not followed Johannes F. Callahan’s interpretation in his edition GNO VII.II., x–xiv, where he places ἐκ between square brackets as a later interpolation. Nor have I followed Ekaterina Kiria, who follows Callahan: Pneumatological Research according to the Third Homily of *De Oratione Dominica* of Gregory of Nyssa, in: *Phasis* 14 (2011) 282–290. This *locus controversus* must be seen against the background of the *Filioque* controversy. In her conviction that Gregory of Nyssa contributed to the Orthodox Church’s anti-*Filioque* stance, Ekaterina Kiria has reduced the *Filioque* to a confusion of the inner-Trinitarian relations with the economic activities of the Trinity. I have instead followed Giulio Maspero (who, in his contribution to the volume *The Fire*, p. 261 n. 99, casts doubt on whether Callahan’s theological arguments for dismissing the philological testimony stand up to scrutiny) and the editors of SC, who in their *introduction*, pp. 155–168, have outlined the *status quaestionis* of this issue, which must be regarded as a matter of textual criticism, as well as their reasons for maintaining ἐκ.

30 WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen*, 69, has called the summary in *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,5–14 “ein Referat und keine direkte Wiedergabe”.

From this his opponents conclude that:

in itself, the Spirit has none of the names that are piously said and thought about the divine nature.

Maced GNO III.I. 90,16–18

A comparable position appears in *Eust*, although Gregory does not go so far there as to draw from the fact that his opponents in *Eust* limit the power of the Spirit compared to that of the Father and the Son the conclusion that his opponents refuse to allow the Spirit to share in the work of creation.³¹

(sc. his opponents contend that) the power of the deity, issuing from the Father as far as the Son, excludes the nature of the Spirit from the divine glory.³²

The fact that Gregory does draw this conclusion in the continuation of *Maced* constitutes a further step in his thinking through of the consequences of his opponents' arguments.³³ In *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,30–98,5, Gregory attributes this consequence to one of his opponents. In this passage, Gregory agrees with his opponents that Scripture does not contain clues about the participation of the Spirit in the work of creation:

'Yes', he says, 'but we have been taught by the scripture that the Father is creator, and likewise also we have learned that all things received their origin through the Son. But the word taught us no such thing concerning the Spirit. And how is it reasonable to bring the Holy Spirit into equal honors with the one who has displayed such great power through creating?' Well, what do we say in response to this?

In *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,5–14, in view also of *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,30–98,5 and 110,24–27,

31 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Ad Eustathium*, 106 n. 66.

32 *Eust* GNO III.I. 7,12–15: ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς μέχρι τοῦ υἱοῦ ἱσταμένην τὴν τῆς θεότητος δύναμιν ἀποκρίνειν τῆς θεϊκῆς δόξης τὴν φύσιν τοῦ πνεύματος (transl. by BRIAN DUVICK).

33 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Ad Eustathium*, 106–107: "Adversus Macedonianos is generally dated later and may reflect a more sophisticated understanding of the fundamentals of his opponents' theology. It shows that the struggle with the Pneumatomachians continued to raise the question of how to classify divine activities."

But you will say that when you think of Father, the Son too is included in the title. Tell me, when you have apprehended the Son in your mind, haven't you also admitted the Holy Spirit? You cannot deny it.

we find essential Pneumatomachian positions expressed clearly, and what we know of Pneumatomachian sources gives us the confidence to accept that this portrayal is historically accurate. The Pneumatomachi think in terms of the Father-Son scheme. They probably regarded the Spirit as a kind of servant being.³⁴

What is the core issue for Gregory in this first confrontation between the positions? The contention by Gregory's opponents that there is a distinction in nature between the Father and the Son on the one hand and the Spirit on the other, causes them to refuse the *homotimia* which the Spirit deserves.

In the continuation of this work, Gregory stresses the necessity of *homotimia* due to the Spirit's full participation in the divine nature. The inclusion of *homotimia* in the Creed of Constantinople gave him the incentive to work on the basis of this concept towards the belief that the Spirit shares fully in the divine nature. In the rest of the text, it is precisely the Spirit's ἐνέργειαι as expressions of God's undivided δύναμις that form the basis upon which Gregory founds his view that the Spirit shares fully in the divine nature. Gregory will explain this in reference to baptism (*Maced* GNO III.I. 105,19–106,24).³⁵ On the basis of Scripture, Gregory demonstrates in his *Ref Eun* that the Spirit, because of the full equality of the activities (διὰ τῆς ταυτότητος τῶν ἐνεργημάτων, *Ref Eun* GNO II. 402,25–26) does not stand outside the nature of the Father and the Son (τὸ μὴ ἀπεξενῶσθαι πάντως τῆς τε τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ φύσεως, *Ref Eun* GNO II. 402,24–25). It is a point of contention between the Pneumatomachi and Gregory whether the activities of the Spirit are the activities of the Father and the Son. If the activities of the Spirit are the same as those of the Father and the Son, Gregory concludes, then there is no distinction in nature between the Father and the Son on the one hand and the Spirit on the other.

34 WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen*, 69–70; MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 189–190.

35 See JOHANNES J. VERHEES, Die ἐΝΕΡΓΕΙΑΙ des Pneumas als Beweis für seine Transzendenz in der Argumentation des Gregor von Nyssa, in: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 45 (1979) 5–31.

What is the rhetorical structure of this part of the text?

Gregory begins with a question to follow up on his opponents' *senseless and misleading opinions about the doctrines* described in the previous passage. What is their accusation? The very first word of the reply is impiety (ἄσεβειν, GNO III.I. 89,16); the very thing of which those who have exalted insights about the Holy Spirit stand accused themselves. This is followed by a new opposition: Gregory's and his allies' confession versus the arbitrariness of his accusers. This opposition is developed in a finely structured, very long phrase of nineteen lines (*Maced* GNO III.I. 89,21–90,14). Gregory's and his allies' confession is foregrounded in a long genitive absolute defined by ἡμῶν at the start (*Maced* GNO III.I. 89,21) and by ὁμολογούντων, which is used twice and thus bears emphasis (*Maced* GNO III.I. 89,22 and *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,5). Once this genitive absolute has ended with ὁμολογούντων, it is followed immediately, in sharp opposition, by: *our opponents claim* (οἱ ὑπεναντίοι φασίν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,5–6), repeated in *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,11. Long *accusativus-cum-infinitivo* constructions depend on this, in which the opponents' heretical claims are concisely described. This long and constructed sentence is followed by the logical final conclusion (ἐκ τοῦ ἀκολούθου κατασκευάζεται, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,15–16).³⁶ At the end of this passage it has become clear that Gregory's opponents with their insight (ταύτης δὲ κρατούσης παρ' αὐτοῖς τῆς ὑπολήψεως, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,14–15) place the Spirit outside the divine nature, which means they stand in diametrical opposition to those who have exalted insights (μεγαλοπρεπεῖς ἔχοντας ὑπολήψεις, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,17–18) about the Holy Spirit. This is also how the passage begun: it is a carefully constructed ring composition.

3 Gregory's Response: The Introduction

3.1 *In the Introduction to His Response Gregory Chooses the Following Point of Departure: Neither Scripture, Nor the Common Notions Accept Any Variation within the Divine Nature, Which Is Simple and Perfect in Goodness (GNO III.I. 90,19–91,12)*

3.1.1 Greek Text

(90,19) Τί οὖν ὁ ἡμέτερος λόγος; οὐδὲν καινὸν ἡμεῖς οὐδὲ παρ' (90,20) ἡμῶν αὐτῶν τοῖς τὰ τοιαῦτα προκαλουμένοις ἀποκρινόμεθα, ἀλλὰ ἀποχρησόμεθα τῇ τῆς θείας

³⁶ Gregory often uses κατασκευάζεται for conclusions about the doctrines of heretics, see *Lexicon Gregorianum* v, col. 256, s.v. κατασκευάζω B.6.b.

γραφῆς περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος μαρτυρία, δι' ἧς θεῖον τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον εἶναι τε καὶ λέγεσθαι μεμαθήκαμεν. εἰ οὖν συντίθενται καὶ αὐτοὶ τούτῳ καὶ μὴ ἀντιβαίνουσι ταῖς θεοπνεύστοις φωναῖς, εἰ-(90,25)πάτωσαν οἱ πρὸς τὸν καθ' ἡμῶν πόλεμον ἔτοιμοι, τίνος ἕνεκεν οὐ πρὸς τὴν γραφὴν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἡμᾶς διαμάχονται; οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ἄλλο τι παρὰ τοῦτό φαμεν. θείας δὲ φύσεως (εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα) ὁμολογούντες οὐδεμίαν ἐπιγινώσκομεν οὔτε ἐκ τῆς τῶν γραφῶν διδασκαλίας οὔτε ἐκ τῶν κοινῶν (90,30) ἐννοιῶν κατ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο διαφορὰν· ὥστε μεμερίσθαι πρὸς ἑαυτὴν τὴν θεῖαν τε καὶ ὑπερέχουσαν φύσιν διὰ τίνος ἐπιτά-(91,1)σεως ἢ ὑφέσεως παρὰ τὸ πλεόν τε καὶ ἔλαττον αὐτὴν πρὸς ἑαυτὴν διαλλάττουσαν. ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἀπλή καὶ μονοειδὴς καὶ ἀσύνθετος εἶναι πεπίστευται καὶ οὐδεμία πλοκὴ καὶ σύνθεσις ἐξ ἀνομοίων περὶ αὐτὴν θεωρεῖται, διὰ τοῦτο, ἐπειδὴν ἅπαξ (91,5) θεῖαν φύσιν τῇ ψυχῇ ἐννοήσωμεν, τὸ ἐν παντὶ θεοπρεπεῖ νοήματι τέλειον διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος τούτου συμπαραδεξάμεθα· τὸ γὰρ θεῖον ἐν παντὶ τῷ κατὰ τὸ ἀγαθὸν λόγῳ τὸ τέλειον ἔχει. εἰ δὲ ἐλλείποι τινὶ καὶ ὑστερίζοι κατὰ τι τῆς τελειότητος, κατὰ τὸ ἐλλείπον χωλεύσει καὶ ὁ τῆς θεότητος λόγος ὡς (91,10) μηκέτι θεῖον ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ μέρει ἢ εἶναι ἢ λέγεσθαι. πῶς γὰρ ἂν τις τῷ ἀτελεῖ καὶ ἐλλείποντι καὶ τῆς ἐτέρωθεν προσθήκης προσδεομένῳ τὴν προσηγορίαν ταύτην ἀρμόσειεν;

3.1.2 Translation

(90,19) What, then, is our plea? We will answer with nothing new, nothing of our own making, to those who summon us to do such things. Rather, we will make use of the testimony of the divine scripture concerning the Holy Spirit, through which we have learned that the Holy Spirit is divine and is called so. So then, if they themselves allow this and do not contradict the God-inspired utterances, then let them—so eager for battle with us!—explain why they are not fighting against the scripture, but against us. We ourselves say nothing besides what this says. Confessing that the Spirit belongs to the divine nature, we recognize from the teaching of the scriptures and from common notions absolutely no variation in it, such that the divine and transcendent nature would be divided from itself through a kind of increase (91) or decrease and would differ from itself as greater and lesser. It is believed to be simple, uniform, and non-composite, and no intertwining or composition from dissimilar things is considered in connection with it. For this reason, once we have conceived of the divine nature in our soul, from this name we have simultaneously recognized perfection in every concept that is appropriate to God. For the divine maintains perfection in every term associated with goodness. If it should fall short in some way or lag behind in any aspect of perfection, to the extent of the deficiency, the idea of deity will falter, since in that part it will no longer be or even be called divine. After all, how could anyone apply this title to something that is imperfect, deficient, and in need of aid from another?

3.1.3 Paraphrase

Gregory introduces nothing new. He follows Scripture, which teaches that the Spirit is divine and is called divine. Neither Scripture nor the common notions accept any variation within the divine nature. The divine, by definition, is simple, uniform, and non-composite. Divine equals perfect in goodness.

3.1.4 Sub-questions

How does Gregory begin his rebuttal?

Gregory begins his response with the question: *So what is our argument?* (Τί οὖν ὁ ἡμέτερος λόγος, *Maced GNO III.I. 90,19*). Needless to say he provides the answer himself, introduced by an emphatic ἡμεῖς (*Maced GNO III.I. 90,19*): Gregory has nothing of his own making to present—as the heretics do, Gregory seems to add implicitly—but he has at his disposal the testimony (μαρτυρία has a legal connotation!) of Scripture about the Holy Spirit, which means he is a disciple (μεμαθήκαμεν, *Maced GNO III.I. 90,23*) of the teaching of Scripture (τῆς τῶν γραφῶν διδασκαλίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 90,29*).³⁷ Significantly, he adds that Scripture is divine, comes from God (θείας γραφῆς, *Maced GNO III.I. 90,21*); described by way of variation in *Maced GNO III.I. 90,24* as the *God-inspired utterances* (ταῖς θεοπνεύστοις φωναῖς). The testimony of Scripture has taught Gregory that the Holy Spirit is divine and is called divine. Thus Gregory places himself on the side of Scripture.³⁸ Gregory cannot understand that his opponents, though they acknowledge the authority of Scripture, nevertheless have turned against him, Gregory. He asks himself why his opponents, still described as such (οἱ ὑπεναντίοι) in *Maced GNO III.I. 90,5*, but denoted in *Maced GNO III.I. 90,25* by the more combative term *they who are eager for battle with us* (οἱ πρὸς τὸν καθ' ἡμῶν πόλεμον ἔτοιμοι), do not fight Scripture but fight him and his allies (διαμάχονται, *Maced GNO III.I. 90,27*), even though there is no difference between his utter-

37 MORWENNA LUDLOW, *Texts, Teachers and Pupils in the Writings of Gregory of Nyssa*, in: LIEVE VAN HOOF & PETER VAN NUFFELEN (ed.), *Literature and Society in the Fourth Century AD. Performing Paideia, Constructing the Present, Presenting the Self* (Mnemosyne Supplements 373), Leiden 2015, 83–102, has demonstrated that Gregory positions himself as a disciple (of Basil, Macrina, Paul, the Bride of the Song of Songs, Christ himself), who in writing his texts moves from being a disciple to being a teacher. It is significant, therefore, that Gregory speaks here in *Maced* about the teaching of Scripture. Taking up this teaching, Gregory also evolves into a teacher in this work. In doing so he complies with the baptismal command of Mt 28:19 in which Jesus instructs his disciples to teach before they baptise: μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.

38 MARIETTE CANÉVET, *Grégoire de Nysse*, 68–69, shows that Gregory, using Plato's dialectical method as it is applied in his *Phaedrus*, also uses Scripture as a normative source in *Maced*.

ances and those of Scripture, so that he is entitled to say of himself that he *confesses* (ὁμολογούντες, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,28) that the Spirit belongs to the divine nature.

What does Gregory mean by the common notions?

In addition to *the teaching of the Scriptures* (τῆς τῶν γραφῶν διδασκαλίας, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,29), Gregory appeals to *the common notions* (τῶν κοινῶν ἐννοιῶν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,29–30). These notions, κοινὰ ἔννοιαι, support Gregory's confession that the Spirit belongs to the divine nature. Although Gregory begins his rebuttal by stating that he has learned from the Scripture that comes from God that the Spirit is divine and is called divine, in fact what follows is a series of reflections on the indivisibility of the divine nature and the participation of the Spirit therein on the basis of *the common notions*. In view of the continuation of the text, it seems as if Gregory wishes to use the common notions to smoothen the way for a correct understanding of the biblical passages that are yet to come. Gregory's theological approach here and elsewhere is twofold: he focuses on the Bible and the ecclesiastical tradition, and he uses the dialectic of his time.³⁹ Concordance between the arguments of Scripture and the common notions is the safest foundation for the truth.⁴⁰ Here in *Maced*, he makes use of the Stoic doctrine of the categories.⁴¹ Gregory is well aware of the lim-

39 Johan Leemans, referring to the title of the Trinitarian treatise Πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλλήνας ἀπὸ τῶν κοινῶν ἐννοιῶν (*Graec*) in his article *Logic and the Trinity: Introducing Text and Context of Gregory of Nyssa's Ad Graecos*, in: VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarianism. Proceedings of the nth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Tübingen, 17–20 September 2008* (VCS 106), Leiden 2011, 111–130, pp. 115–116, following LUCIAN TURCESCU, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Concept*, 69, calls the *common notions* an umbrella term that joins together all the tools of philosophy and logic, juxtaposed with the revelation of Scripture. JAROSLAV PELIKAN, *Christianity and Classical Culture. The Metamorphosis of Natural Theology in the Christian Encounter with Hellenism*, New Haven 1993, 28, in his chapter *Natural Theology as Apologetics* discusses the agreement between the common notions and Scripture: a weapon against heretical doctrines.

40 Scripture can also serve as an arbiter for diverging views, see for instance *Eust*: "Therefore, let the divinely inspired Scripture arbitrate between us, and to those among whom the teachings are found to be concordant with the divine words the vote of the truth will certainly go." (οὐκοῦν ἡ θεόπνευστος ἡμῖν διαιτησάτω γραφή, καὶ παρ' οἷς ἂν εὐρεθῇ τὰ δόγματα συνῶδα τοῖς θεοῖς λόγοις, ἐπὶ τοὺτους ἥξει πάντως τῆς ἀληθείας ἡ ψῆφος, *Eust* GNO III.I. 6,3–6, transl. by BRIAN DUVICK).

41 See BASIL STUDER, *Der Theologieggeschichtliche Hintergrund der Epinoiai-Lehre Gregors von Nyssa*, in: LENKA KARFIKOVÁ ET AL. (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium II. An English Version with Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 10th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 2004* (VCS 82), Leiden 2007, 21–49, pp. 27–28, and the literature listed

itations that are inherent in Greek philosophy, but he nevertheless holds the latter in high esteem whenever Greek philosophy is able to support the testimony of Scripture, or to provide fertile ground for the words of Scripture. Thus in his *Or Cat*, he uses the common notions to convince the pagans of the existence of the Logos and the Spirit on the one hand, and to make the orthodox articles of faith intelligible vis-à-vis the heretics on the other.⁴² In *Eun II GNO I*. 230,2–3 he speaks with admiration of his brother Basil. Gregory describes him as a protagonist of the truth, who combatted Eunomius with the assistance of the combined testimony of Scripture and the common notions (*Eun II GNO I*. 230,2–3):

he (sc. Basil) puts forward arguments based on general principles and on scriptural proofs.⁴³

On the basis of Scripture (*πεπίστευται*, *Maced GNO III.I*. 91,3) and the common notions (*θεωρεῖται*, *Maced GNO III.I*. 91,4) the following can be established: the divine nature knows of no greater or lesser, is not changeable but is simple, uniform, and non-composite. Gregory builds his argument on the basis of this insight, an argument based on the common notions; given the simplicity of the divine nature, perfection is included in naming the divine. Perfection, of course, in every concept of goodness:⁴⁴

there. Gregory deviates on this point from Basil, who at the beginning of chapter 1X of his *De Spiritu Sancto* uses the common notions in a difference sense: the rhetorical category of the common notions and experiences of the faithful as they are based on Scripture and Tradition: “Let us now examine in respect of the Spirit the common notions that we connect with the Spirit; the insights that Scripture offers us in respect of the Spirit, and those insights that we have received from the tradition of the Fathers that are not included in Scripture” (“Ἡδὴ δὲ καὶ περὶ τοῦ Πνεύματος τὰς κοινὰς ἡμῶν ἐννοίας ὁποῖαί τινες εἰσὶν ἐξετάσωμεν, τὰς τε ἐκ τῶν Γραφῶν περὶ αὐτοῦ συναχθείσας ἡμῖν καὶ ἃς ἐκ τῆς ἀγράφου παραδόσεως τῶν πατέρων διεδεξάμεθα, IX 22,1–4). See HERMAN JOSEF SIEBEN SJ, *Basilius von Cäsarea, De Spiritu Sancto. Über den Heiligen Geist, übersetzt und eingeleitet* (Fontes Christiani, 12), Freiburg 1993, 136 n. 1.

42 See JOSEPH BARBEL, *Gregor von Nyssa, Die große katechetische Rede Oratio Catechetica Magna, eingeleitet, übersetzt und kommentiert*, Stuttgart 1971, 106 n. 58.

43 *Eun II GNO I*. 230,2–3: τὰς ἀποδείξεις ἐπήγαγε ταῖς τε κοιναῖς ἐννοαῖς καὶ ταῖς γραφικαῖς μαρτυρίαις ἡσφαλισμένας (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

44 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Ad Eustathium*, 101–102, has called the passages *Maced GNO III.I*. 91,2–6 and 94,3–7 examples of ‘grammatical’ reasoning within the theological language as Gregory develops it. On p. 105 he writes: “So, according to Gregory, there is no good reason to think that some of the divine names refer to God’s nature while others do not. This is based on the grammar, the fundamental patterns of use, of our scriptural language for God.” In addition to ‘grammatical’ reasoning, Gregory develops ‘conjectural’

For this reason, once we have conceived of the divine nature in our soul, from this name we have simultaneously recognized perfection in every concept that is appropriate to God. For the divine maintains perfection in every term associated with goodness.

Maced GNO III.I. 91,4–8

Gregory concludes his argument with a proof by contrapositive (*if God, then perfect* is followed by: *if not perfect, then not divine*); the conclusion is in the form of a rhetorical question. This is how the triad divine nature-simplicity-perfection, i.e. perfect goodness, arises.

Simplicity is not synonymous with a lack of attributes. Simplicity encompasses the divine attributes in their perfection. These perfect attributes encapsulate each other.⁴⁵

Does Gregory make any positive statements about the divine nature?

In this first part of his rebuttal, Gregory speaks of the unchangeability of the divine nature, introduces the triad *simple and uniform and non-composite* (ἀπλή και μονοειδής και ἀσύνητος, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,2–3*), mentions the absence of intertwining or combination of dissimilar parts, and concludes on the basis of the concept of perfection that the divine nature cannot ever require any complement, and cannot therefore ever be deficient.

Eun II GNO I. 364,32–365,3 contains a striking parallel with the succession of ἀπλή και μονοειδής και ἀσύνητος, in a rhetorical question:

But who is so mentally paralysed he does not know that the divine Nature, whatever it may be in essence, is one, understood (θεωρουμένη) as something simple, uniform, uncompounded (ἀπλή τις και μονοειδής και ἀσύνητος), and by no means a manifold composite ...?⁴⁶

reasoning (pp. 105–106) within the fundamental grammar of Christian language: we cannot know the divine nature in itself, we must argue on the basis of assumptions, given the activities of God as these are made visible in Scripture: στοχαστικῶς ἀναλογιζόμεθα, *Eust GNO III.I. 11,1–2*.

45 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and the Transformation of Divine Simplicity*, Oxford 2009, 212: “And being a perfect virtue is just being a virtue without the admixture of that virtue’s opposite. And this state of being unmixed, in turn, is one of Gregory’s fundamental ways of describing the state of being simple.”

46 *Eun II GNO I. 364,32–365,3*: ἀλλὰ τίς οὕτως ἀπόπληκτος ὡς ἀγνοεῖν ὅτι ἡ μὲν θεία φύσις, ὃ τι ποτὲ κατ’ οὐσίαν ἐστὶ, μία ἐστὶν ἀπλή τις και μονοειδής και ἀσύνητος και κατ’ οὐδένα τρόπον ἐν ποικίλῃ τινὶ συνθέσει θεωρουμένη (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

In *Eun GN I* 107,7–9, the divine nature, which is called there the uncreated nature (Ἡ δὲ ἄκτιστος φύσις, *Eun GN I* 107,4), is conceived as the source of good, which source is ἀπλή τε καὶ μονοειδὴς καὶ ἀσύνθετος (*Eun GN I* 107,8–9). A variation on this fixed triad can be found in Gregory's *Beat VII GN VII.II* 160,21–22. Instead of μονοειδές, this reads ἀσχημάτιστον, *without form*: τοῖνυν ἀπλοῦν τὸ θεῖον καὶ ἀσύνθετον καὶ ἀσχημάτιστον εἶναι πεπίστευται.

In fact all these utterances are expressions of negative theology that arise from Gregory's deep awareness (partly shaped by Scripture) that the divine nature is infinite in its essence, ineffable and unknowable. To express this, Gregory uses concepts and words that are derived from Greek philosophy, especially from Plato and neo-Platonism.⁴⁷ In Plato's *Symposium* 211 b1, for example, it is said of the Beautiful, τὸ καλόν, that it is always simple, μονοειδές. However, for Plato (in his *Republic* 509 b9), and in imitation of him, for Plotinus (e.g. in his *Enneads* v. 1,8,8) the absolute, which is good and beautiful, goes beyond being, ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας, that which Gregory, and also Augustine, reject.⁴⁸

4 Gregory's First Response: The Divinity and Full Glory of the Spirit Make Him Equal in Honour and Dignity to the Father and the Son

4.1 *The Perfection of the Divine Nature Compared to the Specific Identities of the Elements of Fire, Water, Air, and Earth (GN III.I 91,13–92,9)*

4.1.1 Greek Text

(91,13) Καθάπερ καὶ διὰ τῶν σωματικῶν ὑποδειγμάτων ἔστι τὸν λόγον πιστώσασθαι. ἢ γὰρ τοῦ πυρὸς φύσις ἐπίσης πᾶσι (91,15) τοῖς συμπληροῦσιν αὐτὴν μορίοις τὴν θερμαντικὴν αἴσθησιν τοῖς ἀπτομένοις παρέχεται· καὶ οὐ τὸ μὲν τι τῆς φλογὸς ὑπερτεταμένην, τὸ δὲ ὑφειμένην ἔχει τὴν θερμασίαν· ἀλλ' ἕως ἂν ᾗ πῦρ, ὅλον διόλου τῇ

47 SALVATORE R.C. LILLA, *Neoplatonisches Gedankengut in den 'Homilien über die Seligpreisungen' Gregors von Nyssa, herausgegeben von HUBERTUS R. DROBNER* (VCS 68), Leiden 2004, 83–84, in the chapter entitled *Die Negative Theologie* has provided a number of *loci* in Greek philosophical writings of ἀπλοῦν, μονοειδές and ἀσύνθετον. Lilla has averred a Christianisation of the heritage of negative theology as it can be found for instance in Plato.

48 ANTHONY MEREDITH has pointed to this in his paper *Divine Incomprehensibility in Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine*, in: J. BAUN & AL. (ed.), *Studia Patristica* 47 (2010) 3–7 (*Cappadocian Writers*), pp. 5 and 7. PAUL VAN GEEST, *The Incomprehensibility of God: Augustine as a Negative Theologian* (Late Antique History and Religion 4), Leuven 2010, has shown that Augustine's work is strongly marked by his awareness of the inscrutability of God. Making people conscious of this serves Augustine's mystical purpose.

ταυτότητι τῆς ἐνεργείας ἀδιάστατον πρὸς ἑαυτὸ τὴν ἔνωσιν ἔχει. εἰ δέ τι κατὰ τι (91,20) μέρος καταψυχθεῖη, οὐκέτι πῦρ κατὰ τὸ κατεψυγμένον ὀνομασθήσεται τῇ πρὸς τὸ ἐναντίον ὑπαλλαγῇ τῆς θερμαντικῆς ἐνεργείας συμμεταποιουμένου καὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος. ὡσαύτως καὶ τοῦ ὕδατος καὶ τοῦ ἀέρος καὶ πάντων τῶν στοιχειωδῶς ὑποβεβλημένων εἰς καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς ἐφ' ἐκάστου λόγος οὐ παρα-(91,25)δεχόμενος πλεονασμὸν ἢ ἐλάττωσιν. οὐδὲ γὰρ τὸ ὕδωρ μᾶλλον ἢ ἔλαττον δύναται λέγεσθαι· ἔως γὰρ ἂν ἐπίσης ὑγρὸν ᾖ, καὶ ἡ προσηγορία τοῦ ὕδατος ἐπ' αὐτοῦ ἀληθεύεται· εἰ δὲ μεταποιηθεῖη πρὸς τὴν ἐναντίαν ποιότητα, συνηλωιώθη πάντως ἐπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ ὄνομα. καὶ τοῦ ἀέρος τὸ μαλακὸν (91,30) τε καὶ ἀνωφερὲς καὶ κοῦφον ἐπίσης πᾶσι τοῖς μορίοις ἐνθεωρεῖται· τὸ δὲ πυκνὸν καὶ ἐμβριθὲς καὶ εἰς γῆν ῥέον διαφεύγει τὸ καὶ ἀήρ ὀνομάζεσθαι. οὕτως καὶ ἡ θεία φύσις, ἔως μὲν ἂν διὰ παντός τοῦ περὶ αὐτὴν εὐσεβῶς θεωρουμένου (92,1) νοήματος τὸ τέλειον ἔχῃ, ἐπαληθεύσει τὴν προσηγορίαν τῇ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τελειότητι· εἰ δὲ ὑποσπασθεῖη τι τῶν συντεινόντων εἰς τὸν τῆς τελειότητος λόγον, ψεύσεται κατ' ἐκεῖνο τὸ μέρος τὸ τῆς θεότητος ὄνομα καὶ οὐκ ἐφαρμόσει τῷ ὑποκει-(92,5)μένῳ· ἴσον γὰρ ἢ καὶ μᾶλλον ἐστὶ τὸ ἀδύνατον ξηρῷ σώματι τὴν τοῦ ὕδατος ἐπωνυμίαν ἀρμόσαι καὶ πῦρ προσαγορεύσαι τὸ κατεψυγμένον ἐν τῇ ποιότητι καὶ τὸ στερρὸν καὶ ἀντίτυπον ἀέρα εἰπεῖν καὶ θεῖον ὀνομάσαι, ᾧ μὴ συνυπακούεται ἡ τῆς τελειότητος ἔννοια.

4.1.2 Translation

(91,13) We can likewise confirm our account through bodily examples. The nature of fire—equally in all the parts that comprise it—gives off a hot sensation to those who touch it. One part of the flame does not have a greater heat, while another has a lesser. Rather, as long as it is fire, it maintains a seamless unity with itself in an absolutely complete identity of activity. Should it cool down in some part, in that cooled part it will no longer be called “fire”, since, as the heating activity diminishes in the opposite direction, the name too gets changed along with it. It is the same for water, air, and all the elementary foundations: for each of them, there is one and the same principle that does not allow increase or diminishment. For example, something cannot be called “water” to a greater or lesser degree. As long as it is wet to the same degree, the title of water also is truly applied to it. But if it is transformed to the opposite quality, surely the name applied to it will be changed as well. Again, the non-resistance, upward motion, and lightness of the air are observed equally in all its parts, whereas what is solid, heavy, and flows to the earth also escapes being called “air”. Likewise also the divine nature—so long as it maintains perfection with respect to every concept which is piously thought about it—(92) will show the truth of its title by its perfection in goodness. But if anything that contributes to the principle of perfection is withdrawn, the name of deity will prove false in that part and will not correspond to the subject. To give the name “divine” to something that does not connote perfection is as impossible as—or rather,

more impossible than—applying the name “water” to a dry body, or giving the title “fire” to what is cool, or calling what is solid and resistant “air”.

4.1.3 Paraphrase

For the elements of physical reality: fire, water, air, and earth, the stability of their activity establishes their specific identity. There is no such thing as fire to a greater or lesser degree, water to a greater or lesser degree, or air to a greater or lesser degree. If the activity changes, the name too would change. Likewise, the name of the divine accords with its specific identity, which is the notion of perfection.

4.1.4 Sub-questions

What is Gregory trying to do by comparing the perfection of the divine nature to the specific identities of the elements of fire, water, air, and earth?

In making this comparison, Gregory intends to lend plausibility to his argument (τὸν λόγον πιστώσασθαι, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,14*), to provide supporting proof, and this by giving examples from the physical world. Examples from concrete, physical reality can help readers of his work to better understand his position on the simplicity of the divine nature. Moreover, this corresponds with his earlier statement about the common notions. One of these common notions is the insight that physical reality can be traced back to four elements. The point of comparison, the *tertium comparationis*, is the presence of the specific identities of the four elements, to which the specific identity of the divine is compared. The visible, physical reality is broken down into its four elements (στοιχειωδῶς, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,23*).⁴⁹ Any one element constantly preserves its own identity because its activity remains identical (τῇ ταυτότητι τῆς ἐνεργείας, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,18*). For each element, a specific identity is established on the basis of its activity, although for the element of earth this happens only in the contrast that is drawn between it and the element of air (*Maced GNO III.I. 91,31–32*). If the activity changes, then the name will change accordingly (συμμεταποιουμένου καὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,22*). The correspondence between the activity of the element and its name plays a crucial role, just as there must

49 Gregory uses στοιχεῖα in the classical scientific sense of the four elements, see for instance *Diem lum GNO IX. 228,9–12*, where Gregory associates the descent into the baptismal font with the descent into the earth by Christ at his death: “We recognize four elements, of which the world is composed, which everyone knows even if their names are not spoken; but if it is well, for the sake of the more simple, to tell you their names, they are fire and air, earth and water.” (τέσσαρα στοιχεῖα γνωρίζομεν, ἀφ’ ὧν ὁ κόσμος ἔχει τὴν σύστασιν, γινώριμα πᾶσι, κὰν σιωπηθῇ τὰ ὀνόματα, εἰ δὲ προσῆκε διὰ τοὺς ἀπλουστεροὺς καὶ τὰς προσηγορίας εἰπεῖν· πῦρ καὶ ἀήρ, γῆ καὶ ὕδωρ, transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

also be correspondence between the name of the divine and the notion of perfection.⁵⁰ In the background, therefore, what is at stake is a vision of human language: on the basis of the activity of an element, human beings are able to name the specific identity of that element, even though this does not enable them to describe the essence of the element in question. The same is true for the identity of the divine. Human beings are able to name the specific identity of the divine: the notion of perfection (ἡ τῆς τελειότητος ἔννοια, *Maced GNO III.I. 92,8–9*), but this is not to say that they have described the essence of the divine. Just as water deserves the predicate of water as long as it is still wet, so human beings can truthfully name the divine as such as long as it includes the notion of perfection in goodness.

What does the stability of the ἐνεργεία tell us?

In view of physical reality, which can be traced back to four elements, Gregory emphasises the importance of the stability of the activity of an element (τῇ ταύ-τότητι τῆς ἐνεργείας, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,18*) as an indication of the preservation of the specific identity of the element in question, and of the corresponding predicate. This insight, one of the common notions, will help Gregory later on in *Maced* in his argument that the Spirit has the same nature as the Father and the Son.

In *Eun I GNO I. 149,3–26*, Gregory sharply distinguishes οὐσία and ἐνεργεία. If I wish to learn something about the wind, for instance, the definition is not enough; referring me to the effect of the wind will not be enough to reach its essence: a sand-dune piled up by the wind, or a heap of chaff, or a scatter of dust. In *Ref Eun GNO II. 402,16–19*, Gregory compares the effects of radiation and warmth, i.e. fire (λάμπων τε καὶ θερμαίνων, *Ref Eun GNO II. 402,17*), to the Spirit who does the works of the Father (τὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἔργα, *Ref Eun GNO II. 402,18*): the salvation of human beings (τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην σωτηρίαν, *Ref Eun GNO II. 402,13*). That which continues to radiate and give off warmth must be fire. If the Spirit does the works of the Father, we confess of him that he is of the same nature as the Father, and has the same power (τὴν αὐτὴν ἐκείνῳ πάντως δύναμιν τε καὶ φύσιν ἔχει, *Ref Eun GNO II. 402,14–15*).⁵¹

⁵⁰ See ὀνομασθήσεται, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,21*; συµμεταποιουμένου καὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,22*; λέγεσθαι, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,26*; ἡ προσηγορία τοῦ ὕδατος, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,27*; συνηλλοιώθη ... καὶ τὸ ὄνομα, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,28–29*; ὀνομάζεσθαι, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,32*; τὴν προσηγορίαν, *Maced GNO III.I. 92,1*; τὸ τῆς θεότητος ὄνομα, *Maced GNO III.I. 92,4*; τὴν τοῦ ὕδατος ἐπωνυμίαν, *Maced GNO III.I. 92,6*; προσαγορεῦσαι, *Maced GNO III.I. 92,6*; εἰπεῖν θεῖον ὀνομάσαι, *Maced GNO III.I. 92,8*; συνυπακούεται, *Maced GNO III.I. 92,8*.

⁵¹ MICHEL BARNES, *The Power of God—Δύναμις in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology*,

Because Scripture testifies that the Spirit gives life just as the Father and the Son do (ζωοποιεῖν, *Ref Eun* GNO II. 402,22), Scripture demonstrates, by affirming that the activities of the Spirit are identical (διὰ τῆς ταυτότητος τῶν ἐνεργημάτων, *Ref Eun* GNO II. 402,25–26) to those of the Father and the Son, that the nature of the Father, of the Son, and of the Spirit are also identical: unity of essence (τὴν τῆς οὐσίας ἐνότητα, *Ref Eun* GNO II. 403,6).⁵² Here, too, we see how common notions can help to fathom the consequences of the testimony of Scripture. In his *Eust* GNO III.I. 10,22–11,15, probably written in 380, Gregory makes a similar argument. Because the divine nature transcends the understanding of probing human beings, we cannot do otherwise than be led in our inquiry of the divine nature by the activities. There is, we may conclude, a difference in natures because the activities do not correspond. Here Gregory uses the activity of fire, which never cools, and ice, which never warms, as supporting examples from the physical world: distinction in activity presupposes distinction in nature. If there is identity of activity, we perforce conclude that there is identity of the divine nature. The constancy of the activity of an element such as fire, water, and by consequence, of the divine nature through the notion of perfection, will prove to be the prelude, later on in *Maced*, to the correspondence between the activities of Father, Son, and Spirit, which is an important argument for the idea that the Spirit is of the same rank as the Father and the Son.

What limitations does Gregory impose upon human knowledge of the divine nature?

Supported by physical reality as it is broken down into its four elements, Gregory, in his quest for the specific identity of the divine, believes that human beings are capable of thinking about the divine nature and to utter a predic-

Washington 2001, 301–307, has demonstrated that Gregory's first preference, on the basis of Scripture (Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναιμι, 1 Cor 1:24), is for the nexus φύσις—δύναμις in respect of the full divinity of the Son, and for the nexus φύσις—ἐνέργεια in respect of the Spirit; in *Ref Eun*, written in the second half of 383, after *Maced*, Gregory also begins to apply his "one power means one nature" argument to the Spirit. Barnes has unfortunately ignored the important passage in *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,1–4: ἀλλὰ πηγὴ μὲν δυνάμεώς ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ, δύναμις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· ἡ δὲ κτίσις πάσα ὅση τε αἰσθητὴ καὶ ὅση ἀσώματος τῆς θείας δυνάμεώς ἐστιν ἀποτέλεσμα. As will become clear, this sentence about God's δύναμις, which connects the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit *ad intra* and *ad extra*, is a key sentence in *Maced*.

52 Cf. JOHANNES J. VERHEES, Die ἘΝΕΡΓΕΙΑΙ des Pneumas als Beweis für seine Transzendenz in der Argumentation des Gregor von Nyssa, in: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 45 (1979) 5–31, pp. 8–9. Verhees (p. 7) speaks of "Ein methodisches Prinzip: Pneumatologie 'an Hand der ἐνέργεια'".

ate of the divine nature. The predicate in question is perfection, thanks to the perfection of the good. Human beings may call the divine nature divine, Gregory explains, on condition that human understanding of the divine nature attributes perfection to this nature. The human understanding and the corresponding linguistic utterance are qualified and thus limited by adding the word *piously* (εὐσεβῶς, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,33*)⁵³ and by the specific relationship which Gregory draws between human thinking and the divine nature: he uses not *περὶ αὐτῆς* but *περὶ αὐτῆν* (*Maced GNO III.I. 91,33*): human understanding cannot take the divine nature as an object of its thinking, cannot reach the divine nature as such, but must needs be remain on the outside of this nature, circling around it, always conscious of the *diastema* that separates it from God. Human beings can only make true statements about the divine nature on the basis of their own human limitation, which is described as εὐσεβῶς (that is: considering the *diastema* between God and human beings). Such statements never encompass the essence of the divine nature, but truthfully *circum*-scribe it. In *Eun II GNO I. 396,13–16*, Gregory says, after he has described the attributes of God using the *alpha-privans* (for instance ἄφθαρτόν, ἀτελεύτητον, ἀγέννητον, *Eun II GNO I. 396,5–6*), that the positive predicates of God (τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ὀνομάτων, ὧν ἡ σημασία θέσεώς τινός ἐστιν ἐνδεικτικὴ καὶ ὑπάρξεως, *Eun II GNO I. 396,13–14*) give no indication of the divine nature itself, but only of what can be piously thought in relation to the divine nature (*περὶ αὐτῆν*, *Eun II GNO I. 396,15*; τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ὀνομάτων ... τῶν περὶ αὐτῆν εὐσεβῶς θεωρουμένων τὴν ἐνδειξιν ἔχει, *Eun II GNO I. 396,13–16*).

Thus in thinking about the divine nature and in affirming a predicate, in itself correct, of this nature, human beings do not grasp the essence of the divine nature, but, given their human limitations, they form an image of partial aspects of God, of God's activities, his ἐνέργεια.⁵⁴ Positive statements about God are first and foremost representations, indications of what human beings, given the *diastema* that separates them from God, piously think about God's

53 Cf. JAVIER IBAÑEZ & FERNANDO MENDOZA, *Naturaleza de la "Eusebeia"*, 268–270, who postulate a close connection in Gregory between εὐσεβεία and ἀλήθεια.

54 GIULIO MASPERO, *Trinity and Man. Gregory of Nyssa's Ad Ablabium* (vcs 86), Leiden 2007, 33–45, with a view to the interpretation of *Abl GNO III.I. 42,20–43,2* (καὶ πᾶν ὄνομα, εἴτε παρὰ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης συνηθείας ἐξηγῆται εἴτε παρὰ τῶν γραφῶν παραδέδοται, τῶν περὶ τὴν θείαν φύσιν νοουμένων ἐρμηνευτικὸν εἶναι λέγομεν, οὐκ αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως περιέχειν τὴν σημασίαν) has pointed out the importance of the combination of *περὶ* with the accusative. God's ἐνέργεια are what circle the divine nature. On p. 43, Maspero adds: "Thus the knowledge through ἐνέργεια is for Gregory similar to the knowledge of a child who, perceiving the voice or the steps of his father, recognizes him and says 'it is father', ..."

activities. These representations or indications serve to preserve the reverent distance between God and human beings, and to create scope for worship.

Gregory expresses this very clearly in *Eun* II GNO I. 265,7–10:⁵⁵

The purpose in speaking of God is not to think up resounding and harmonious verbal beauty, but to identify a reverent notion (εὐσεβῆ διάνοιαν ἐξευρεῖν) by which what befits the thought of God (τὸ πρέπον τῇ ὑπολήψει τῇ περὶ θεοῦ) may be kept intact.⁵⁶

How did Gregory structure his comparison of the perfection of the divine nature to the specific identities of the elements of fire, water, air, and earth?

Gregory concluded the previous passage (*Maced* GNO III.I. 90,19–91,12) with the conviction, based on the faith, that the divine nature is simple, uniform, and non-composite. On the basis of the common notions, the non-compositeness of the divine nature leads to the conclusion that the divine nature is perfect (*Maced* GNO III.I. 91,2–8). Gregory concludes in the form of a rhetorical question with a proof by contrapositive (*if God, then perfect* is followed by *if not perfect, then not divine*). In the following passage (*Maced* GNO III.I. 91,13–92,9) he clarifies his conclusion on the basis of the physical reality in its four elements of fire, air, water, and earth.⁵⁷ Again, he concludes his reflection by

55 SCOT DOUGLASS, Gregory of Nyssa and Theological Imagination, in: LENKA KARFIKOVÁ ET AL. (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium II. An English Version with Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 10th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 2004* (VCS 82), Leiden 2007, 461–471, p. 467, has pointed to this passage in *Eun* II. STEPHEN PARDUE, On Faithfully Knowing an Infinite God: Humility as an Intellectual Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium* II, in: *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 13 (2011) 62–76, has examined the concept of intellectual humility in Gregory, for instance through an analysis of *Eun* II GNO I. 245–262, in which Abraham appears as the example per excellence of intellectual humility. MORWENNA LUDLOW, Divine Infinity and Eschatology: the Limits and Dynamics of Human Knowledge, According to Gregory of Nyssa (CE II 67–170), in: LENKA KARFIKOVÁ ET AL. (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium II. An English Version with Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 10th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 2004* (VCS 82), Leiden 2007, 217–237, pp. 217–223, had previously already pointed to the importance of this part of *Eun* II in the perspective of the human ascent to God, according to the example of Abraham who ascends the ladder (πάντα ἐφόδια πρὸς τὴν ἄνω πορείαν καὶ ὑποβάθρας ποιούμενος, *Eun* II GNO I. 253,5–6), the ladder being an eschatological and epistemological image.

56 *Eun* II GNO I. 265,7–10: τὸ γὰρ σπουδαζόμενον ἐν τοῖς περὶ θεοῦ λόγοις ἐστὶν οὐχὶ ῥημάτων εὐφωνίαν εὐχροτόν τε καὶ ἐναρμόνιον ἐπινοῆσαι, ἀλλ' εὐσεβῆ διάνοιαν ἐξευρεῖν δι' ἣς τὸ πρέπον τῇ ὑπολήψει τῇ περὶ θεοῦ φυλαχθήσεται (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

57 GEORGE CHRISTOPHER STEAD, Ontology and Terminology in Gregory of Nyssa, in:

contrapositive (*if God, then perfect; if not perfect, then not divine*), in *Maced GNO III.I. 91,32–92,9*. This contrapositive is composed of a comparison of the divine nature and its specific identity to the four elements and their specific identities. This comparison of the perfection of the divine nature to the specific identities of the elements of fire, water, air, and earth enables Gregory to define the specific identity of the four elements *and* of the divine nature using the term ἐνεργεία (*Maced GNO III.I. 91,18*). This term helps him to describe the specific characteristic of God, his perfection in goodness, without being able to define the divine nature. He concluded the previous section with a rhetorical question:

After all, how could anyone apply this title to something that is imperfect, deficient, and in need of aid from another?

Maced GNO III.I. 91,10–12

In the following section, he answers this rhetorical question with the statement that he needs for the rest of his work: if God, then perfect.

To give the name ‘divine’ to something that does not connote perfection is as impossible as—or rather, more impossible than—applying the name ‘water’ to a dry body, or giving the title ‘fire’ to what is cool, or calling what is solid and resistant ‘air’.

Maced GNO III.I. 92,5–9

In this way, he creates a rhetorically structured ring composition which lays the foundations for affirmations about the Holy Spirit.

HEINRICH DÖRRIE & MARGARETE ALTENBURGER & UTA SCHRAM (ed.), *Gregor von Nyssa und die Philosophie. Zweites Internationales Kolloquium über Gregor von Nyssa, Freckenhorst bei Münster, 18.–23. September 1972*, Leiden 1976, 107–119, pp. 116–117, has commented on “the truly extraordinary conclusion [sc. in *Maced*] that all fires are equally hot—or perhaps that all parts of a fire are equally hot—just as all water is equally wet. This is not only absurd in itself, but directly contradicts the explanation he gives in Hex. 116ab of the differing brightness of the heavenly bodies.” In making this statement, Stead fails to do justice to the context within which Gregory uses fire here: the *comparison* of the divine nature to the specific characteristics of the elements.

4.2 *The Characteristics of the Spirit: He Is Divine, Therefore Simple, Therefore Perfect in Goodness, Therefore Worthy of Worship*
(GNO III.I. 92,10–30)

4.2.1 Greek Text

(92,10) Εἰ οὖν ἀληθῶς καὶ οὐ μέχρις ὀνόματος θεῖον τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ὑπὸ τῆς γραφῆς καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν πατέρων ἡμῶν προσηγόρευται, τίς ἔτι λόγος ἐστὶ τοῖς ἀντιστατοῦσι τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πνεύματος; εἰ γὰρ θεῖον, καὶ ἀγαθὸν πάντως καὶ δυνατὸν καὶ σοφὸν ἔνδοξόν τε καὶ αἰδῖον⁵⁸ καὶ πάντα ὅσα τοῦ τοιοῦτου (92,15) γένους ἐστὶν ὀνόματα πρὸς τὸ μεγαλοπρεπὲς τὰς ὑπολήψεις ἡμῶν ἐπαίροντα. ταῦτα οὐκ ἐκ μετουσίαις ἔχειν ἢ ἀπλότης τοῦ ὑποκειμένου διαμαρτύρεται ὡς ἄλλο μὲν τὴν φύσιν ἐαυτοῦ φύσει ὑπονοεῖν εἶναι, ἕτερον δὲ τὴν γενέσθαι τῇ παρουσίᾳ τῶν εἰρημένων· ἴδια γὰρ ταῦτα τῶν σύνθετον εἰληχότων (92,20) τὴν φύσιν. ἀπλοῦν δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον παρὰ πάντων ἐπίσης συνωμολόγηται καὶ ὁ ἀντιλέγων οὐκ ἔστιν. εἰ οὖν ἀπλοῦς ὁ τῆς φύσεως αὐτοῦ λόγος, οὐκ ἐπίκτητον ἔχει τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ ὃ τί ποτέ ἐστιν, ἀγαθότης ἐστὶ, σοφία, δύναμις, ἀγιασμός, δικαιοσύνη, αἰδιότης, ἀφθαρσία, πάντα τὰ ὑψηλὰ (92,25) τῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ ὑπεραίροντα· τὸ οὖν τοιοῦτον ἐκ ποίας διανοίας ἄδοξον εἶναι κατασκευάζουσιν οἱ μὴ φοβούμενοι τὸ χαλεπὸν τῆς κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος βλασφημίας κατάκριμα; σαφῶς γὰρ τοῦτο προτείνουν τὸ μὴ δεῖν αὐτὸ δοξαστὸν εἶναι πιστεῦναι, οὐκ οἶδα τὸ τῇ φύσει ἔνδοξον τίνι λογισμῷ (92,30) μὴ ὁμολογεῖν ὃ ἐστὶ λυσιτελὲς εἶναι κρίνοντες.

4.2.2 Translation

(92,10) So then, if the Holy Spirit is named divine truly and not in name alone by scripture and our fathers, what argument will remain for those who oppose the glorification of the Spirit? Now, if it is divine, then certainly it is also good, powerful, wise, glorious, eternal, and all such names that lift our thoughts to a level appropriate to its grandeur. The simplicity of the subject ensures that it does not possess these names by participation, as if one could suppose that it is one thing in its own nature, but becomes something different through the presence of the aforementioned names. Such a situation is proper to those beings that have a composite nature. But all people equally confess that the Holy Spirit is simple; there is no one who would dispute it. So then, if the form of its nature is simple, it does not possess goodness as something acquired. Rather, its essence⁵⁹ is goodness, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, eternity, incorruptibility, and all the names that are lofty and transcendent. On what grounds, then, do these people, who do not fear the dreadful penalty for blasphemy against

58 There appears to be a typographical error in the Greek text of *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,14 in GNO: a *lenis* is missing in αἰδῖον.

59 ARG: αὐτὸ ὃ τί ποτέ ἐστιν. Literally, “the very thing that it is.”

the Spirit, argue that such a one lacks glory? Clearly, their proposition is that we must not believe that the Spirit should be glorified. I do not understand by what reckoning they deem it profitable not to confess that what is glorious by nature is what it is.

4.2.3 Paraphrase

The Holy Spirit is worthy of worship because he is divine, simple, and perfect in goodness. He does not possess the divine characteristics such as goodness by participation or by acquisition, but he *is* the divine characteristics, *is* goodness itself. These are the grounds for worship of the Spirit, and it is therefore incomprehensible that there are blasphemers who deny and fight it.

4.2.4 Sub-questions

How does Gregory characterise his opponents?

The substance of his argument is that the Holy Spirit is divine and is therefore worthy of worship, and that those who deny this, those who oppose the glory of the Spirit, deny God, and do not fear the dreadful penalty for blasphemy against the Spirit. Having in the first part of this section characterised his opponents as those who oppose the glory of the Spirit (τοῖς ἀντιστατοῦσι τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πνεύματος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,12–13), he goes further in the last part of this section, after he has confessed the divinity and thus the simplicity and perfection of the Spirit: he accuses his opponents of committing the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit that is mentioned in Matthew's Gospel (ἡ δὲ τοῦ πνεύματος βλασφημία, Mt 12:31; cf. Mk 3:29). His opponents do not fear the dreadful penalty for blasphemy (τὸ χαλεπὸν τῆς κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος βλασφημίας κατὰκριμα, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,27). They have already condemned themselves by their opposition against the glory of the Spirit. Gregory then points to Scripture and the Fathers (ὑπὸ τῆς γραφῆς καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν πατέρων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,11), who call the Spirit divine not only in name but also in truth. On three occasions, Gregory expresses his incomprehension at his opponents, and accuses them of absurdity (τίς ἔτι λόγος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,12; ἐκ ποίας διανοίας, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,25–26; οὐκ οἶδα ... τίني λογισμῷ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,29) and asks himself what benefit is to be had from refusing to confess that the Spirit is worthy of worship. Gregory uses negative terms to qualify the arguments of his opponents: they concoct an argument (κατασκευάζουσιν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,26)⁶⁰ and use incomprehensible reasoning (τίني λογισμῷ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,29). Later in *Maced*, Gregory

60 See *Lexicon Gregorianum* v, k. 253–254, s.v. κατασκευάζω. For the link between βλασφημία and κατασκευάζω, see *Lexicon Gregorianum* v, col. 61b, s.v. βλασφημία.

returns to this point of blasphemy. After he has described the Spirit as perfect in honour and perfectly good, and the denial of this as worse than absurd and as blasphemous (the combination of absurdity and blasphemy occurs again in *Maced* GNO III.I. 94,14–15), he contends that the sin against the Holy Spirit is at the same time also blasphemy against the Son and, through the Son, against the Father.⁶¹

it is clear that, whenever the one who is prejudiced and contemptuous boldly declares something against the Spirit's glory, by the same sequence he has extended his blasphemy to the Father through the Son.

Maced GNO III.I. 107,13–16

Gregory here extends Basil's statement about the sin against the Holy Spirit. Basil had argued that the Holy Spirit is glorified by the communion with the Father and the Son, *and* by the witness of the Only-Begotten One, who says that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.⁶² By refusing to attribute divine glory to the Holy Spirit, people run the risk of bringing upon themselves the sin from which it is impossible to escape.⁶³ Basil regards nothing as worse than not fearing the threats which the Lord uttered against those who blaspheme the Spirit (τοῖς τὸ Πνεῦμα βλασφημοῦσιν, *De Spiritu Sancto* xxix 75,15–16). For Gregory, the core issue is that blaspheming the Spirit, refusing to attribute divine glory to the Spirit, also involves blasphemy against the Son and the Father. Athanasius, in his Letters to Serapion (from the period 357–360), already grouped the Tropicists and Arians together; to regard the Spirit or the Son as creatures is to blaspheme the Godhead.⁶⁴

61 In *Eun* I GNO I. 84,4–5 Gregory describes the judgment that Eunomius is calling down upon himself by committing the sin against the Spirit in a similar way: the inescapable conviction for blasphemy (τὴν ἄφυκτον κατάκρισιν τῆς βλασφημίας).

62 Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* (xviii 46,32–36): οὕτω δοξάζεται τὸ Πνεῦμα διὰ τῆς πρὸς Πατέρα καὶ Υἱὸν κοινωνίας, καὶ διὰ τῆς τοῦ Μονογενοῦς μαρτυρίας, λέγοντος: « Πᾶσα ἁμαρτία καὶ βλασφημία ἀφεθήσεται ὑμῖν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἡ δὲ τοῦ Πνεύματος βλασφημία οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται. »

63 Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* (xxiv 55,15–16): Πῶς οὖν οὐ πρόδηλος ὁ κίνδυνος ἐκ τῶν τοιούτων λόγων τὴν ἄφυκτον ἁμαρτίαν ἐφ' ἑαυτοὺς ἐπισπᾶσθαι; Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* (xxviii 70,30–32): Ἡ που φοβεραὶ ὑμῖν αἱ ὑπὲρ τῶν τοιούτων λόγων εὐθυναὶ τοῖς παρὰ τοῦ ἀψευδοῦς ἀκηχοῦσι Θεοῦ, ἀσυγχώρητον εἶναι τὴν εἰς τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον βλασφημίαν.

64 Athanasius, *Epistula 1 ad Serapionem* (1 10,19–21): Ἄλλ' οἱ τῷ ὄντι τροπικοί, συνθέμενοι τοῖς Ἀρειανοῖς, καὶ μεριστάμενοι μετ' αὐτῶν τὴν εἰς τὴν θεότητα βλασφημίαν, ἵνα ἐκείνοι μὲν τὸν υἱὸν, οὗτοι δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα κτίσμα λέγωσιν. KYRIAKOS SAVVIDIS, *Athanasius Werke. Band 1, Teil 1, Die dogmatischen Schriften, Lieferung 4 Epistulae ad Serapionem* (Patristische Arbeitsstelle Bochum), Berlin 2010, 477.

Is the Spirit divine?

Gregory once again appeals to the authority of Scripture and the Fathers to emphasise the divinity of the Spirit. The Spirit is truly divine, and not just in name. Having in *Maced GNO III.I.* 89,18–19 (τοῖς τῶν πατέρων ἐπόμενοι δόγμασιν ὁμολογοῦμεν περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος) stressed the authority of the Fathers in relation to the divinity of the Spirit, and having in *Maced GNO III.I.* 90,19–26 referred to the testimony of the Scriptures that come from God (θείας γραφῆς, *Maced GNO III.I.* 90,22) and that contain the God-inspired utterances (ταῖς θεοπνεύστοις φωναῖς, *Maced GNO III.I.* 90,24), Gregory here acknowledges the possibility that his opponents are prepared to call the Spirit divine, but without truly regarding the Spirit as divine. Scripture and the Fathers resist such a strategy, Gregory argues here. The conclusion of this argument follows in the next section: his opponents have no other option than to choose one of two options:

either we must not call it divine or we must not take the concepts appropriate to God away from the divinity. For this reason, it is altogether necessary to grasp these two, each along with the other: the divine nature together with the fitting idea of it and the pious notions in connection with the divine and transcendent nature.

Maced GNO III.I. 93,29–94,2

If they confess the divinity of the Spirit not only in name, but also in truth, then they also confess the notions appropriate to the divine nature that are concomitant with this. In a fine ring composition, Gregory returns to the theme of *Maced GNO III.I.* 92,13–16:

Now, if it is divine, then certainly it is also good, powerful, wise, glorious, eternal, and all such names that lift our thoughts to a level appropriate to its grandeur (πρὸς τὸ μεγαλοπρεπές).

in *Maced GNO III.I.* 94,3–7:

So then, since it has been said—and said well—that the Spirit belongs to the divine nature, and every notion worthy of its grandeur (πᾶσα δὲ μεγαλοπρεπῆς ἔννοια) is indicated together with this name, as has been said, then he who concedes that point implicitly confesses the remaining ones along with it, that the Spirit is glorious, powerful, and anything that conveys the sense of superiority.

One final time, Gregory highlights the divinity of the Spirit, in the passage about the unity of activity of the three divine persons (the Spirit, too, is Creator), which he concludes with:

To those who agree with the more pious idea about the Holy Spirit, we say this: it is divine and belongs to the divine nature.

Maced GNO III.I. 101,1–3

In his speech to the Council of Constantinople in 381 (*Deit Euag*),⁶⁵ on the basis of the story of the maker of the Ark of the Covenant, Besalel, (Exodus 35:30–35), Gregory appealed to those who oppose the divinity of the Spirit to listen carefully (ἀκουέτω τοῖνυν ὁ πνευματομάχος, *Deit Euag* GNO IX.I. 333,11): God's nature is one and simple, and the Spirit belongs to this divine nature (*Deit Euag* GNO IX.I. 334,1–4).⁶⁶

Is the Spirit simple?

Gregory says:

But all people equally confess that the Holy Spirit is simple (ἀπλοῦν); there is no one who would dispute it.⁶⁷

Maced GNO III.I. 92,20–21

Gregory can make this statement on condition that the Spirit truly belongs to the divine nature and is not just called divine in name. He uses a *petitio principii*

65 This speech, which was probably held on the occasion of the inauguration of Gregory of Nazianzus as bishop of Constantinople in the spring of 381, during the Council, shortly after negotiations with the Pneumatomachi broke down, shows Gregory of Nyssa's crucial importance in the conversations with the Pneumatomachi: "a key figure among those bishops of the council who genuinely sought to convince the Pneumatomachian delegation of the error of their ways". (MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 198–199). For the dating of this speech, see chapter 1, section 6.2. The Context of *Adversus Macedonianos* (p. 24 note 53).

66 ὁ πνευματομάχος also appears in Gregory's sermon *Steph* I (ὁ πνευματομάχε, GNO X.I. 89,16) and in his sermon *Pent* (τῶν Πνευματομάχων, GNO X.II. 291,4).

67 LEWIS AYRES, *Nicaea and its Legacy. An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology*, Oxford 2004, 281, has spoken of the 'grammar' of divinity that was at stake in the fourth century. The acknowledgement of the simplicity of God belongs to this set of linguistic rules: "Pro-Nicenes assume the impossibility of there being degrees of divine existence, and they assume God to be the only true simple reality." The consequence is as follows: "The generation of the Son and the breathing of the Spirit thus occur within the bounds of the divine simplicity."

here. Gregory first contends: the Spirit is divine, in his essence and not just in name, and therefore he is ἀπλοῦν, simple, which is not incidentally a scriptural term. Then Gregory argues: the Spirit is acknowledged by all to be simple, and therefore he *is* the divine characteristics and does not possess these through participation. Gregory specifically needs to the Spirit to be simple, because this allows him to deny his opponents the possibility of calling the Spirit divine, but, by ascribing to the Spirit a composite nature, at the same time robbing him of being goodness, power, and glory, in which divine characteristics the Spirit is then said only to participate (ἐκ μετουσίας, *Maced GNO III.I.* 92,16).⁶⁸ This would be to divest the Spirit of his divinity in Gregory's terms: a composite nature and the divine nature are mutually exclusive. Gregory explains this at great length in *Maced GNO III.I.* 104,4–26, followed by yet another passage in which he attributes the divine nature to the Spirit: *Maced GNO III.I.* 104,27–105,18. In *Maced GNO III.I.* 104,8–12:

After all, reason recognizes no intermediary between them, such that it supposes between them there is some characteristic mark of a nature invented on the border of the created and the uncreated, as if partaking of both (ἀμφοτέρων μετέχειν) but being neither of the two completely.

In *Maced GNO III.I.* 105,14–18:

Either the Spirit does not provide these goods to others, since it does not have them in its own nature, or if one believes that the Spirit does give them, he has undoubtedly already conceded that it has them. And this is a unique and distinctive feature of the divine nature alone, namely, to provide goods while standing in need of nothing external.

What characteristics does Gregory attribute to the Spirit?

In his opposition to his opponents who deny the glory of the Spirit, Gregory initially (*Maced GNO III.I.* 92,13–14) used adjectives: if the Spirit is divine (θεῖον, cf. Exodus LXX 31:3: πνεῦμα θεῖον σοφίας καὶ συνέσεως; Job 33:4: πνεῦμα θεῖον τὸ ποιήσάν με), then he must undoubtedly also be good (ἀγαθόν, cf. Ps LXX 142:10, τὸ πνεῦμα σου τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὁδηγήσει με) and powerful (δυνατόν, cf. Wisd 5:23, πνεῦμα δυνάμεως), wise (σοφόν, cf. Wisd 1:6, φιλόανθρωπον γὰρ πνεῦμα σοφία; Eph 1:17, πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως), full of glory (ἐνδοξόν, not a biblical term, but

68 It is proper to creatures to (be able to) participate in God's life, whereas God's nature knows of no participation, nor therefore does the Spirit. See DAVID L. BALÁS, *Metousia Theou. Man's Participation in God's Perfections According to Gregory of Nyssa*, Rome 1966, 125–128.

nonetheless fitting given the fact that the Spirit is later called δόξα), and eternal (ἄϊδιον, not biblical either, perhaps after Heb 9:14, διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου⁶⁹).⁷⁰ On the basis of the simplicity of the Spirit, Gregory concludes that the Spirit did not acquire these characteristics through participation, but that he *is* these characteristics. In order to draw such a sharp distinction between characteristics through participation and characteristics on the basis of the nature of the Spirit, he subsequently (*Maced* GNO III.I. 92,23–24) uses nouns:

it (sc. the Spirit) does not possess goodness as something acquired. Rather, its essence is goodness (ἀγαθότης), wisdom (σοφία), power (δύναμις), holiness (ἀγιασμός, cf. 2 Thess 2:13, ἐν ἀγιασμῷ πνεύματος), justice (δικαιοσύνη, cf. 1 Cor 6:11, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε [...] ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν), eternity (ἄϊδιότης), incorruptibility (ἀφθαρσία, cf. Wisd 12:1, τὸ γὰρ ἀφθαρτόν σου πνεῦμα), and all the names that are lofty and transcendent.

Simpl GNO III.I. 66,13–18, written shortly before the Council of Constantinople in 381,⁷¹ contains a similar list of attributes of the Spirit, attributes that, as Scripture shows, apply to the Father *and* the Son *and* the Spirit: ἡ ἀφθαρσία, ἡ μακαριότης, τὸ ἀγαθόν, τὸ σοφόν, τὸ δυνατόν, τὸ δίκαιον, ἡ ἀγιότης. A similar list of nouns can be found in Gregory's letter to the heretic Heracleianus (*Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 77,26–30). This letter addresses topics that correspond to the topics discussed in *Maced*, and it was probably written in 380–381 or 383.⁷² In

69 VOLKER DRECOLL, Le substrat biblique des attributs divins dans les *Opera Minora* de Grégoire de Nysse, in: MATTHIEU CASSIN & HÉLÈNE GRELLIER (ed.), *Grégoire de Nysse: La Bible dans la Construction de son Discours. Actes du Colloque de Paris, 9–10 février 2007*, Paris 2008, 133–146, p. 139.

70 VOLKER DRECOLL, Le substrat biblique, 140–144, links the characteristics of the Spirit mentioned in *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,10–25, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,7–13 and *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,17–30 to verses in Scripture. For the first passage, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,10–25, see pp. 140–141.

71 PIERRE MARAVAL, Chronology of Works, in: *BDGN* (2010) 153–169, p. 154.

72 THIERRY ZIEGLER, *Les petits traités trinitaires de Grégoire de Nysse: Témoins d'un itinéraire théologique (379–383)*, PhD Strasbourg 1987, 365–366, has placed *Epist* XXIV after *Maced*; the arguments of *Maced* are repeated in the letter. CHRISTOPH KLOCK, *Untersuchungen zu Stil*, 160–161, n. 84: “Ep. 24 dürfte zur selben Zeit (nach dem Konzil?) verfasst sein.” Klock has called the letter “eine expositio fidei”. ANNA M. SILVAS, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters*, 190–191, has dated the latter to 383. GIULIO MASPERO, *Trinity and Man. Gregory of Nyssa's Ad Ablabium* (VCS 86), Leiden 2007, XXII: “due to its synthetic character ... after the Council of Constantinople.” ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrinal Works. A Literary Study*, Oxford 2018, 65, has concluded that Gregory defends the profession of faith of *Epist* XXIV in *Maced*.

this letter, Gregory draws a direct connection between enumerating the characteristics that belong to the divine nature of the Trinity (τῶν προσόντων τῇ μεγαλειότητι τῆς θείας φύσεως ἀγαθῶν, *Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 77,22–23), which are collectively called τὰ προσόντα ἀγαθὰ (*Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 77,29–30), and giving fitting and due honour to the Holy Trinity (τῆς δόξης ποιούμεθα τὴν ἀπόδοσιν, *Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 77,30). By listing these ἀγαθὰ—ἀφθαρσία, αἰδιότης, ἀθανασία, ἀγαθότης, δύναμις, ἁγιασμός, σοφία, πᾶν νόημα μεγαλοπρεπές τε καὶ ὑψηλόν—we give the Trinity the honour it is due (*Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 77,27–29). Gregory emphasises in this letter that the healthy faith demands that perfection in all goodness be confessed of each person of the Trinity (*Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 78,18–20). On these grounds, it is also true of the Spirit that he *is* the characteristics mentioned. Attributing these characteristics to the persons of the Trinity, and in this case, in *Maced*, to the Spirit, is not to deny that the divine nature cannot be expressed in words or comprehended by the mind (ἄφραστος γὰρ ἐστὶ λόγῳ καὶ νοήματι ἄληπτος, *Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 76,15–16). What cannot be understood, cannot be comprehended by the mind and cannot be grasped by reasoning (τὸ ἀκατάληπτον καὶ ἀπερινοήτον καὶ λογισμοῖς ἀπερίδρακτον, *Epist* XXIV GNO VIII.II. 76,17–18), applies to each of the divine persons. And yet Gregory is entitled to attribute these characteristics to the divine nature and to each of the three persons without compromising the transcendence and incomprehensibility of God. The perfection of the characteristics mentioned transcends human comprehension.⁷³ In *Maced*, Gregory underlines this once again by adding the words *whatever else he may be* (αὐτὸ ὃ τί ποτέ ἐστίν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,23), a phrase that Gregory uses regularly, sometimes complemented by τῇ φύσει or κατ' οὐσίαν, to emphasise the incomprehensibility of God's essence.⁷⁴

What is the rhetorical structure of this section?

Gregory opens this section by expressing his lack of understanding at his opponents in a rhetorical question: if the Spirit is addressed as divine by Scripture and the Fathers, in truth and not just in name, what argument remains to

73 MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS BRUFAU, *El Espíritu Santo*, 198–200, rejects the distinction that ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa*, 203, draws between the divine nature and perfect goodness, which is inherent in the divine nature.

74 *Cant* I GNO VI. 37,13; *Cant* III GNO VI. 89,16; *Eun* II GNO I. 230,24–25; *Eun* II GNO I. 267,16–17; *Eun* II GNO I. 268,26; *Eun* II GNO I. 329,8–9; *Eun* II GNO I. 365,1; *Eun* II GNO I. 365,20–21; *Eun* II GNO I. 382,17–18; *Eun* III GNO II. 38,25–26; *Eun* III GNO II. 158,13; *Eun* III GNO II. 181,27; *Eun* III GNO II. 234,13–14; *Eun* III GNO II. 257,7; *Inscr* GNO V. 155,25; *Vit Moys* GNO VII.I. 4,6–7; *Or dom* II SC 362,4–5; GNO VII.II. 23,15; *Beat* I GNO VII.II. 80,10; *Beat* III GNO VII.II. 103,13; *Beat* VI GNO VII.II. 140,15–16; *An et res* GNO III.III. 39,14–15.

oppose the glory of the Spirit? He uses a *conclusio a maiore ad minus* here: being divine, as *maius*, implies the following *minora*.⁷⁵ Once he has established the simplicity of the Spirit⁷⁶ and the concomitant perfection of the characteristics of the Spirit, from which the divinity of the Spirit flows, he issues a harsh verdict on his opponents: they commit blasphemy against the Spirit, because they do not believe that the Spirit is worthy of worship.⁷⁷ Concluding this section as if it were a ring composition, Gregory again expresses his rhetorical amazement: what argument do they concoct to avoid confessing that the Spirit is worthy of worship? They who accuse Gregory and his allies of blasphemy (see the first lines of *Maced*), it now transpires, are themselves worthy of the harsh verdict of blasphemy against the Spirit. Gregory does not defend himself against their accusation of impiety, but accuses them with his own accusation against them: *they* are guilty of the sin against the Holy Spirit. The issue at stake is whether the Spirit is worthy of worship, whether he is full of glory.

4.3 *As the Third in the Sequence, the Spirit, Too, Possesses the Divine Nature in Full, and Thus the Concepts Appropriate to the Divine Nature (GNO III.I. 92,31–94,2)*

4.3.1 Greek Text

(92,31) Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐκεῖνο αὐταρκες εἰς ἀπολογίαν αὐτοῖς, ὅτι ἐπειδὴ κατὰ τὴν τάξιν τρίτον ὑπὸ κυρίου τοῖς μαθηταῖς παραδέδοται, διὰ τοῦτο τῆς θεοπρεποῦς ἐννοίας ἀπηλλοτριῶται. ἐφ' ὧν γὰρ ἡ κατὰ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐνέργεια οὐδεμίαν ἐλάτ-(93,1) τωσιν ἢ παραλλαγὴν ἔχει, πῶς ἐστὶν εὐλογον τὴν κατὰ τὸν ἀριθμὸν τάξιν ἐλαττώσεώς τινος, τῆς κατὰ φύσιν παραλλαγῆς, οἶεσθαι σημεῖον εἶναι; ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἐν τρισὶ λαμπάσι διηρημένην βλέπων τὴν φλόγα—αἰτίαν δὲ τοῦ τρίτου φωτὸς (93,5) ὑποθώμεθα εἶναι τὴν πρώτην φλόγα ἐκ διαδόσεως διὰ τοῦ μέσου τὸ ἄκρον ἐξάψασαν—ἔπειτα κατασκευάζοι πλεονάζειν ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ φλογὶ τὴν θερμασίαν, τῇ δὲ ἐφεξῆς ὑποβεβηκέναι καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἐλαττον ἔχειν τὴν παραλλαγὴν, τὴν δὲ τρίτην μηδὲ πῦρ ἔτι λέγεσθαι, καὶ

75 VOLKER DRECOLL, *Le substrat biblique*, 144 n. 23, incorrectly calls this a “*conclusio a minore ad maius*”. In my view, the divinity of the Spirit is the *maius*.

76 Gregory uses a familiar rhetorical device here: he points to the common ground that fundamentally unites him with his opponents, in this case the Spirit’s simplicity, so as to subsequently confront his opponents with this in an argument. HENRIETTE M. MEISSNER, *Rhetorik und Theologie. Der Dialog Gregors von Nyssa De Anima et Resurrectione* (Patrologia 1), Frankfurt 1991, 134–138, has described “Gregor’s Formen des δι’ ὁμολογουμένων λόγῳ προσάγειν in Gregors Schriften”. This passage is discussed on p. 134 n. 30 and p. 135 n. 33.

77 Gregory accuses his opponents of arguing that no one should believe that the Spirit is worthy of worship. He uses the word *δοξαστόν* for this, the only place in Gregory’s writings where this word occurs.

παραπλησίως καίη καὶ φαίνη (93,10) καὶ πάντα τὰ τοῦ πυρὸς κατεργάζεται· εἰ δὲ κωλύει οὐδὲν πῦρ εἶναι τὴν τρίτην λαμπάδα, καὶ ἐκ προλαβούσης ἀναλάμψῃ φλογός, τίς ἡ σοφία τῶν διὰ τοῦτο τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἀξίαν ἀθετεῖν εὐσεβὲς νομιζόντων, ἐπειδὴ περ μετὰ πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν ἡριθμήθη παρὰ τῆς θείας φωνῆς; εἰ μὴν γὰρ λείπει (93,15) τι τῶν θεοπρεπῶν νοημάτων ἐν τοῖς ἐπιθεωρουμένοις τῇ φύσει τοῦ πνεύματος, καλῶς αὐτῷ προσμαρτυροῦσι τὸ ἄδοξον· εἰ δὲ διὰ πάντων τὸ μεγαλεῖον τῆς τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἀξίας κατανοεῖται, τί μικρολογοῦσι περὶ τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῆς δόξης; ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἀνθρωπον τινὰ λέγων εἶναι μηκέτι (93,20) ἀσφαλὲς ἡγοίτο συνομολογεῖν ἐπὶ τούτου τὸ λογικὸν ἢ θνητὸν ἢ εἴ τι ἄλλο περὶ τὸν ἀνθρωπον λέγεται καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἀνατρέποι πάλιν ὁ ἔδωκεν· εἰ γὰρ οὐ λογικός, οὐδὲ ἀνθρωπος πάντως· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο δέδοται, πῶς τὸ συνημμένως μετὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου νοούμενον ἀμφιβάλλεται; οὕτω τοίνυν (93,25) εἰ ἀληθεύει περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ὁ θεῖον λέγων, οὐδὲ ὁ τίμιόν τε καὶ ἔνδοξον ἀγαθόν τε καὶ δυνατὸν εἶναι τοῦτο διοριζόμενος ψεύδεται· τῇ γὰρ τῆς θεϊότητος ἐννοίᾳ πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα νοήματα συνεισέρχεται· ὥστε ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι τῶν δύο τὸ ἕτερον, ἢ μηδὲ θεῖον λέγειν ἢ μηδὲν τῶν θεοπρεπῶν νοημάτων (93,30) ὑποσπᾶν τῆς θεϊότητος. διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ πάντως μετ' ἀλλήλων τὰ δύο καταλαμβάνεσθαι, καὶ τὴν θεῖαν φύσιν μετὰ τῆς (94,1) προσφους ὑπολήψεως καὶ τὰς εὐσεβεῖς ἐννοίας περὶ τὴν θεῖαν τε καὶ ὑπερέχουσαν φύσιν.

4.3.2 Translation

(92,31) Nor will it suffice for their defense to say that since the Lord handed down to the disciples that the Spirit is third in order (cf. Mt 28:19), he is ipso facto estranged from the appropriate notion of God. In the case of subjects whose beneficent activity displays no decrease (93) or divergence at all, how is it reasonable to think that numerical order is indicative of a decrease and a divergence in nature? Take the case of a flame divided among three lamps. Let us posit that the first flame is the cause of the third light in that it kindles the last light by transmitting the flame through the intermediary light. Our opponents' argument is as if someone observing this flame were to argue that the heat is greatest in the first flame, while in the next it diminishes and changes to a lesser heat, and the third is no longer even called fire, even though it burns and shines equally with the others and has all the effects of fire. Now, if nothing prevents the third lamp from being fire, even though it shines forth from the prior flame, what sort of wisdom lies in their consideration that, for the same reason—namely, that it is numbered after Father and Son by the divine voice—it is pious to deny the dignity of the Holy Spirit? If among the attributes of the Spirit's nature there is anything that falls short of the concepts appropriate to God, then [our opponents] would do well to testify that it lacks glory. But if the majesty of the Holy Spirit's dignity is perceived in all respects, why do they quibble over confessing its glory?

It is as if someone called another a human being, but was not sure whether to go on and additionally confess that the person is rational or mortal or anything else that is said about humanity, and thus overturns what she had granted. For if the person is not rational, then he is certainly not a human being. But if she grants this latter point,⁷⁸ how can she doubt the concept that is connected with humanity? In the same way, therefore, if one speaks the truth when he calls the Spirit divine, then he is not speaking falsely when he defines the Spirit as honorable, glorious, good, and powerful. For all such concepts are introduced together with the notion of divinity. Hence, one of these two must be the case: either we must not call it divine or we must not take the concepts appropriate to God away from the divinity. For this reason, it is altogether necessary to grasp these two, each along with the other: the divine nature together with the (94) fitting idea of it and the pious notions in connection with the divine and transcendent nature.

4.3.3 Paraphrase

A later place in the order of the divine persons does not in any way detract from the fullness of the Spirit's divine nature. Just as all concepts that are appropriate to being human befit a human being, so all concepts that are appropriate to the concept of divinity befit the Spirit. There is therefore no other option than either to acknowledge the full divinity of the Spirit or to deny that the Spirit is divine.

4.3.4 Sub-questions

On what grounds do his opponents refuse to attribute the full divine nature to the Spirit?

Because, as Mt 28:19 shows, the Lord Jesus transmitted the Spirit as third in the sequence to his disciples, the Spirit does not possess the fullness of the divine nature, according to Gregory's opponents. Gregory forcefully rejects this argument (*Maced GNO III.I. 100,19–26*):

For this reason, apart from the difference in order and in subsistence (κατὰ τάξιν καὶ ὑπόστασιν), we comprehend no variation [among them] in any respect. Instead, while we maintain that it is numbered third in the sequence after Father and Son, and third in the order of the tradition, we confess its inseparable connection in all other respects: in nature, honor, deity, glory, majesty, omnipotence, and in the pious confession.

⁷⁸ ARG: Namely, that he is a human being.

What new accusation does Gregory make against his opponents?

Gregory at this point deploys a new weapon in his rhetorical battle against the Pneumatomachi. Using the form of a question that expresses his incomprehension, he accuses them of mean-spiritedness in their reasoning in respect of the confession of the glory of the Spirit (τί μικρολογοῦσι περὶ τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῆς δόξης; *Maced* GNO III.I. 93,18–19).

This accusation of small-mindedness returns in the following passage, where Gregory demonstrates his incomprehension at the fact that his opponents do give appropriate honour to the Father and the Son, but begrudge the Spirit this honour:

These people alternate between restrictiveness and generosity, insofar as they love giving honor to the Father and grant that equal honors belong to the Son, but become stingy with the homage they give to the Spirit (ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ πνεύματος σμικρολογούντων τὴν χάριν). Since it has been shown that the honor that belongs properly to the divine nature is not made full by our free choice*, but rather exists with it naturally, what could their purpose be in doing so?

Maced GNO III.I. 97, 21–26

Gregory charges his opponents with mean-spiritedness for the third time when he speaks of the human incapacity of rendering fitting honour to the Spirit; he ironically calls his opponents sages:

As for adoration and worship and all such things that these hair-splitting sages bring up on their own behalf, we say the following: the Holy Spirit is loftier than all honors that arise among us on the basis of human free choice. Our worship is of less worth than the honor we owe.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,26–31

The first accusation of small-mindedness in reasoning is accompanied by a comparison: if you reason about the Spirit in a small-minded way, you are like someone who fails to include essential human characteristics in the notion of a human being, like human reason. Gregory gives free rein here to his irony: his opponents are like people who in their reasoning trample upon the most elementary laws of logic.⁷⁹

79 HENRIETTE M. MEISSNER, *Rhetorik und Theologie*, 134 n. 30, has called the coherence between the notion of a human being and his or her associated characteristics an example of the rhetorical device of δι' ὁμολογουμένων λόγῳ προσάγειν.

Gregory contrasts his opponents' mean-spirited and small-minded reasoning (ἡ μικροπρέπεια τῶν νοημάτων, *Maced GNO III.I. 99,25*) with orientation to the concepts that are appropriate to God. Gregory repeatedly mentions the names and concepts that are appropriate to God: πᾶσιν ἅπαξ τοῖς θεοπρεπῶς λεγομένοις ὀνόμασί τε καὶ νοήμασι (*Maced GNO III.I. 90,9–10*); τὸ ἐν παντὶ θεοπρεπεῖ νοήματι τέλειον (*Maced GNO III.I. 91,5–6*); τῆς θεοπρεποῦς ἐννοίας (*Maced GNO III.I. 92,33*); τῶν θεοπρεπῶν νοημάτων (*Maced GNO III.I. 93,15*); τῶν θεοπρεπῶν νοημάτων (*Maced GNO III.I. 93,29*). This contrast must be seen against the background of the importance customarily afforded in (late) antiquity to 'the appropriate', τὸ πρέπον/*decorum*. Appropriateness was an important category in grammatical and rhetorical training.⁸⁰ Gregory specifies this appropriateness: appropriate to God and to God's glory.

To what end does Gregory use the comparison of the three lamps?

Gregory had already used the image of fire to emphasise the unity of God and the inseparability of the Spirit from the Father and the Son earlier in this work (*Maced GNO III.I. 91,14–22*):

The nature of fire—equally in all the parts that comprise it—gives off a hot sensation to those who touch it. One part of the flame does not have a greater heat, while another has a lesser. Rather, as long as it is fire, it maintains a seamless unity with itself in an absolutely complete identity of activity. Should it cool down in some part, in that cooled part it will no longer be called 'fire', since, as the heating activity diminishes in the opposite direction, the name too gets changed along with it.

Continuing this image of the constant effects of fire, Gregory in *Maced GNO III.I. 92,31–94,2* places three lamps before his readers. Two have been kindled from the other, but they shine in equal measure and all three emit heat and light equally. The observer of this scene who no longer attributes fire and heat to the third lamp, even though it burns and shines equally with the others because it was kindled last is accused of absurdity. On the basis of this comparison Gregory attempts to discredit and brand as unwise the observer who sees the transmission of flame and fire and still deduces from this the absence of fire and heat in the third lamp. This comparison helps Gregory to accuse his opponents of petty lack of wisdom, and he ironically calls them wise, because,

80 KATHY EDEN, *Hermeneutics and the Rhetorical Tradition: Chapters in the Ancient Legacy and Its Humanist Reception*, New Haven 1997, 31–40.

following the analogy of the three lamps, they deny the divine dignity of the third in the divine order, the Spirit.

The importance of this image of the burning fire for Gregory's vision of the Trinity becomes evident when we look at his *Eun I GNO I*. 180,14–181,11, where he uses the image of three suns.⁸¹ Having described the Son as the second sun who shines together with (συνεκλάμποντα, *GNO I*. 180,24–25), and generated by the first sun, he mentions the third sun, which has its origins in the original light (ἐκ τοῦ πρωτοτύπου φωτός, *Eun I GNO I*. 181,2–3) and emits its rays by means of the second sun (δι' αὐτοῦ μὲν ἐκλάμπον, *Eun I GNO I*. 181,1–2): the Spirit.⁸²

81 GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 255: "... the three suns, which, in Gregory's theological intention, are exactly parallel to the three torches of *Adversus Macedonianos*." It is clear from the introduction to the metaphor of the three suns that Gregory is conscious of the limitations of the metaphors he uses, specifically in the passage where he moves from the metaphor of the one sun with its rays to the metaphor of the three suns. He mentions the weakness of the image (ἐν τῇ τοῦ ὑποδείγματος ἀτονίᾳ, *Eun I GNO I*. 180,22) there so as to provide an opening to move to the metaphor of the three suns, which of course also has its dangers: the risk of tritheism. According to ALCO MEESTERS, *The Cappadocians and their Trinitarian Conceptions of God*, in: *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie* 54 (2012) 396–413, pp. 408–409, Gregory's use of the image of the three suns avoids the suggestion that the Son and the Spirit proceed from the *ousia* of the Father. Gregory (and Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus) prefers perfect symmetry between the divine persons. In his *Antirrhe GNO III.I*. 171,16, Gregory compares the incarnation of the Son to a sun that enters a dark cave: οὐδὲν τις ἥλιος ἐν γυνοφώδῃ σπηλαίῳ εἰσσυκκιζόμενος, a reversal by Gregory of Plato's image of the soul which, by contrast, leaves the cave, while Gregory shows God as the One with whom human nature is united and who enters the cave like the sun, see SHIGEKI TSUCHIHASHI, *The Likeness to God and the Imitation of Christ. The Transformation of the Platonic Tradition in Gregory of Nyssa*, in: GEOFFREY D. DUNN & WENDY MAYER (ed.), *Christians Shaping Identity from the Roman Empire to Byzantium. Studies Inspired by Pauline Allen* (VCS 132), Leiden 2015, 100–116, pp. 108–110. HUI XIA, *From Light to Light. An Investigation into the Role of the Light Imagery in Gregory of Nyssa's Spiritual Theology*, PhD KU Leuven 2014, has shown the importance for Gregory of light as an image of God, both as regards the inner life of the Trinity and the human spiritual journey to God.

82 KARL HOLL, *Amphilochius von Ikonium in seinem Verhältnis zu den Grossen Kappadoziern*, Tübingen 1904, 214–215, has rightly stated in respect of this *locus* in *Eun I*: "An der zuletzt angeführten Stelle ist besonders klar ersichtlich, dass dieses διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ etwas sehr anderes ist, als das abendländische filioque. Nach Gregor bilden der Vater und der Sohn nicht, um mit Augustin zu reden, e i n principium, sondern die eigentliche αἰτία des Geistes ist der πατήρ; die Vermittlung des Sohnes hat nur die Bedeutung, die Kraft des Vaters weiterzuleiten. Deshalb kann auch Gregor, wo auf Vollständigkeit nichts ankommt, einfach sagen, dass der Geist ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ist." GIULIO MASPERO, *Trinity and Man*, 165–168, esp. p. 167, has rightly said with regard to this passage: "the beauty and strength of the continuity between economy and theology is prominent." On p. 168: "... he (sc. Gregory) affirms healthily the monarchy of the Father, while giving a role that is not exclusively passive to

but he is perceived as in all perfection exalted to the supreme height with Father and Son, is counted after the Father and the Son, and bestows on all those able to participate an access through himself to the Light envisaged in the Father and the Son.⁸³

The unity of the divine nature and the personal distinction between the three divine persons are neatly joined together here.

In using images for the Trinity, Gregory is conscious of the relative nature of these images, of the weakness of human representations. He realises that he is running the risk of suggesting tritheism, and hierarchy and interval within the Trinity.⁸⁴ In *Eun* III GNO II. 198,6–200,7, in his explanation about the eternal birth of the Son, he even goes so far as to reject all images, even those of Scripture, of the mutual relations of the divine persons and to admit only λόγος and νοῦς:

Since however, through his very great love for mankind, the grace of the Holy Spirit has provided that from many sources there should be implanted in us divine thoughts about the Only-Begotten, he has added the remaining kind of what is classed as generation, that of thought and word.⁸⁵

the Son in the procession of the third Person.” In view of the *locus* in *Eun* I mentioned above, ALCO MEESTERS, *God in drie woorden. Een systematisch-theologisch onderzoek naar de Cappadocische bijdrage aan het denken over God Drie-enig*, PhD Rijksuniversiteit Groningen 2006, 78, is not right in saying: “Het opmerkelijke en waarschijnlijke nieuwe is dat bij Gregorius (sc. in *Maced*) de derde toorts wordt ontstoken door de middelste die op haar beurt haar oorzaak in de eerste heeft.”

83 *Eun* I GNO I. 181,8–11: ἀλλὰ πάση τελειότητι πρὸς τὸ ἀκρότατον ἐπήρμενον μετὰ πατρός καὶ υἱοῦ θεωρεῖται, μετὰ πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν ἀριθμεῖται, καὶ δι' ἑαυτοῦ τὴν προσαγωγὴν πρὸς τὸ ἐπινοούμενον φῶς τὸ ἐν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ πασι τοῖς μετασχεῖν δυνάμενοις χαρίζεται (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

84 RICHARD P.C. HANSON, *The Transformation of Images in the Trinitarian Theology of the Fourth Century*, in: *Studia Patristica* 17/1 (1982) 97–115, p. 107, demonstrates that both Basil and the two Gregories reject or transform traditional images of the Tri-Une Godhead: “But it should be recognized that the Cappadocians, who come at the end of this period of the formation of doctrine, are more uneasy with all images designed to illustrate the relations of the Persons of the Trinity to each other than their predecessors, whether those images are Scriptural, traditional or recent. They are much more aware than their predecessors of the weakness of virtually all images in that they imply a lapse of time or some sort of interval between the Persons, and are anxious to remove that weakness.” See also Hanson's later opus magnum, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy* 318–381, Edinburgh 1988, 734–737.

85 *Eun* III GNO II. 200,3–7: ἐπεὶ δὲ διὰ πλείονα φιλανθρωπίαν ἢ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος χάρις πολλα-

He immediately adds the qualification by the sublime (ὕψηλός) John, whose ἐν ἀρχῇ in Jn 1 Gregory interprets as ἐν οὐσίᾳ, that the Word possesses οὐσία, which Gregory then describes as *precisely the first and blessed nature* (ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ πρώτῃ καὶ μακαρίᾳ φύσει), to avoid the notion of a word that disappears as soon as it is spoken.⁸⁶

How does Gregory conclude the first part of his response?

Gregory corners his opponents: they must choose, at least if they wish to be considered people who reason logically. On the basis of his preceding argument and the images discussed in it, Gregory definitively cuts off the intermediate way they wish to take (the Spirit is divine, but is not worthy of the divine honour because the Spirit does not possess the fullness of the divine nature). Either his opponents must deny that the Spirit is divine, or they must acknowledge that attributing the divine nature to the Spirit implies the presence of all the divine characteristics. If you wish to avoid the harsh verdict of blasphemy against the Spirit (τὸ χαλεπὸν τῆς κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος βλασφημίας κατάκριμα, *Maced GNO III.I. 92,27*), Gregory stresses here, for the sake of your εὐσεβεία you will inevitably have to acknowledge the correspondence between the divine nature and the pious concepts (τάς εὐσεβεῖς ἐννοίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,1*) that are connected with the divine and transcendental nature.

4.4 *The Acknowledgement of the Divine Nature of the Spirit Leads to the Confession of His Full Glory and Perfection in Goodness (GNO III.I. 94,3–34)*

4.4.1 Greek Text

(94,3) Ἐπεὶ οὖν εἴρηται τῆς θείας φύσεως εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ καλῶς εἴρηται, πᾶσα δὲ μεγαλοπρεπὴς ἔννοια τῷ ὀνόματι (94,5) τούτῳ καθὼς εἴρηται συνεμφαίνεται, ὁ ἐκεῖνο δοὺς τῇ δυνάμει συνωμολόγησε τὰ λειπόμενα, τὸ καὶ ἔνδοξον εἶναι καὶ

χόθεν ἡμῖν ἐγγενέσθαι τὰς θείας περὶ τοῦ μονογενοῦς ὑπολήψεις ὡκονομήσατο, προσέθηκεν καὶ τὸ λειπόμενον τῶν ἐν γεννήσει θεωρουμένων εἶδος, τὸ ἐκ τοῦ νοῦ φημι καὶ τοῦ λόγου (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

- 86 STUART G. HALL, Gregory of Nyssa, *Against Eunomius Book Three* (Translation), in: JOHAN LEEMANS & MATTHIEU CASSIN (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III, Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Leuven, 14–17 September 2010* (VCS 124), Leiden 2014, 42–233, p. 161 and n. 133, has rightly observed: “Greek ἐν, usually translated ‘in’, is commonly used in that instrumental sense for which English uses ‘with’ (e.g. ‘with a tool’) ... Gregory thinks of the Word as *possessing* being (οὐσία) and affirms that he possesses the same being and nature as that of the Father.”

δυνατὸν καὶ εἴ τι πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον φέρει τὴν σημασίαν. οὐδὲ γὰρ φύσιν ἔχει μὴ ὁμολογείσθαι ταῦτα ἐπὶ τοῦ πνεύματος διὰ τὸ ἀπεμφαῖνον τῶν ἀντιδιαστελλομένων τοῖς τοι-(94,10)οῦτοις ὀνόμασιν· ὁ γὰρ ἔνδοξον⁸⁷ μὴ διδοὺς ἄδοξον δώσει· καὶ ὁ τὸ δυνατὸν ἀθετῶν ἐπ' αὐτοῦ τῷ ἐναντίῳ συνθήσεται· ὡσαύτως καὶ περὶ τοῦ τιμίου καὶ ἀγαθοῦ· καὶ τὰ πρὸς τὰ κρεῖττονα εἰ μὴ παραδέχοιτο, τὰ ἐναντία πάντως ὁμολογήσει. εἰ δὲ φρικτὸν τοῦτο καὶ πάσης ἀτοπίας καὶ βλασφημίας ἐπέ-(94,15)κεινα, πρόδηλον ὅτι τοῖς εὐσημοτέροις ὀνόμασί τε καὶ νοήμασι περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος οἱ εὐσεβοῦντες συνθήσονται καὶ ἐροῦσιν εἶναι ταῦτα, ἃ δὴ πολλάκις εἰρήκαμεν, τίμιον, δυνατόν, ἔνδοξον, ἀγαθόν καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο τῶν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν συντεινόντων λέγεται. ταῦτα δὲ οὐκ ἀτελῶς προσεῖναι τῷ (94,20) πνεύματι οὐδὲ περιωρισμένην ἔχοντα τοῦ καλοῦ τὴν ποσότητα, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ ἄπειρον ταῖς κλήσεσι συμβαίνοντα· οὐ γὰρ μέχρι τινὸς τίμιον, εἴτα ἄλλο τι νοεῖται παρὰ τὸ τίμιον, ἀλλ' αἰ τοιούτου. καὶ εἰ κατόπιν τῶν αἰώνων λογίζοιο καὶ εἰ πρὸς τὸ ἐφεξῆς ἀποβλέποις, ἐν οὐδενὶ τὸ λείπον εἰς τιμὴν (94,25) ἢ δόξαν ἢ δύναμιν ἐξευρήσεις ὡς ἢ κατὰ προσθήκην αὐξεσθαι ἢ ἐλάττωσθαι δι' ὑφαιρέσεως. οὐκοῦν εἰ ὅλον δι' ὅλου τέλειον, ἐν οὐδενὶ δέχεται τὴν ἐλάττωσιν. καθ' ὃ γὰρ ἂν μειωθῇ περὶ τὴν τοιαύτην ὑπόνοιαν ἢ τελειότης, κατ' ἐκεῖνο δώσει χώραν ταῖς ἀτιμωτέραις τῶν ὑπολήψεων· τὸ γὰρ μὴ τελειῶς τίμιον, (94,30) μέρει τινὶ τοῦ ἐναντίου μετέχειν ὑπονοεῖται. εἰ δὲ τοῦτο καὶ μέχρις ἐννοίας λαβεῖν τῆς ἐσχάτης παραπληξίας ἐστί, καλῶς ἔχει πάντως ἀόριστον αὐτῷ καὶ ἀπερίγραφτον καὶ κατ' οὐδὲν μέρος ἡλαττωμένην προσμαρτυρεῖν τὴν ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς (94,34) τελειότητα.

4.4.2 Translation

(94,3) So then, since it has been said—and said well—that the Spirit belongs to the divine nature, and every notion worthy of its grandeur is indicated together with this name, as has been said, then he who concedes that point⁸⁸ implicitly confesses the remaining ones along with it, that the Spirit is glorious, powerful, and anything that conveys the sense of superiority. Indeed, it is perverse to refuse to confess these names in the case of the Spirit, because of the unsuitability of the names that are opposite to these ones. I mean that he who does not grant glory will grant a lack of glory, and he who denies power will agree that the opposite is true of it, and similarly with honor and goodness. And if he does not admit the terms that connote superiority, he will certainly confess their opposites. But if this loathsome consequence goes beyond all absurdity and blasphemy, then it is clear that those who are pious will give their assent

87 There appears to be a typographical error in the Greek text of *Maced* GNO III.I. 94,10 in GNO: ἔδοξον should be ἔνδοξον.

88 ARG: Namely, that the Spirit belongs to the divine nature.

to the more distinct names and concepts for the Holy Spirit and will say that these are the ones which we have often mentioned: honorable, powerful, glorious, good, and any other term that fosters piety.

Now, these realities do not belong to the Spirit in an imperfect manner. Nor do they possess a limited amount of goodness, but rather without any limit they correspond with their terms. For the Spirit is not honorable up to a certain point, while beyond that point it is understood as something other than honorable; rather, it is always such. If your calculations could reach before the ages and if you could look ahead at what is to come, you would find the Spirit deficient in no respect, either in honor or glory or power, such that it might either be augmented by addition or lessened by subtraction. So then, if it is completely perfect, it can be diminished in no respect. For where perfection is diminished, as it is on a conjecture like we are dealing with [here], there too perfection will give way to more dishonorable ideas. After all, what is not perfectly honorable will be assumed to partake of the opposite in some part. But to entertain the mere thought of this is a sign of extreme madness, so it is certainly best to testify that its perfection in the good things is infinite, uncircumscribed, and deficient in no part.

4.4.3 Paraphrase

The acknowledgement of the divine nature of the Spirit allows of no other possibility than to confess his full glory and unlimited perfection in all goodness. This confession is proof of piety. The refusal to confess the full glory of the Spirit goes hand in hand with the denial of the divine nature of the Spirit; not confessing the full glory of the Spirit as one of the divine persons is absurd and is the mark of blasphemous people.

4.4.4 Sub-questions

How does Gregory continue his attack on his opponents?

In view of the result achieved (the acknowledgement of the divine nature of the Spirit implies the confession of his full glory), Gregory again contrasts the pious, people who both acknowledge the divine nature of the Spirit and confess his full glory and perfection in all goodness, with those who, though they acknowledge the divine nature of the Spirit, refuse to accept the corollary: the unlimited nature of the divine characteristics, so that they attribute the opposite of these characteristics to the Spirit. Having previously charged them with small-mindedness (τί μικρολογούσι περὶ τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῆς δόξης; *Maced GNO III.I. 93,18–19*), Gregory now expands his attack further. Gregory now accuses the people in question of absurdity and blasphemy (πάσης ἀτοπίας καὶ βλασφημίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,14*), in fact, entertaining inferior ideas is a sign of extreme

madness (τῆς ἐσχάτης παραπληξίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,31*). Gregory here connects the accusation of extreme madness with that of blasphemy.⁸⁹

What contrast does Gregory put forward?

Gregory repeatedly refers in varying collective terms to the pious concepts connected with the divine and transcendental nature (τὰς εὐσεβεῖς ἐννοίας περὶ τὴν θεῖαν τε καὶ ὑπερέχουσιν φύσιν, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,1–2*) mentioned in the previous section: in the next section he uses the collective term “every exalted concept” (πάσα δὲ μεγαλοπρεπὴς ἔννοια, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,4*) and subsequently the description “anything in his name that refers to that which is higher” (εἴ τι πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον φέρει τὴν σημασίαν, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,7*), the indication “all names ... that refer to that which is higher” (τὰ πρὸς τὰ κρεῖττονα, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,12–13*), subsequently “clear concepts and names” (τοῖς εὐσημοτέροις ὀνόμασι τε καὶ νοήμασι, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,15–16*), then “any other name that is conducive to piety” (εἴ τι ἄλλο τῶν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν συντείνοντων, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,18–19*), and finally “these characteristics and their names extend into infinity” (ἐπὶ τὸ ἄπειρον ταῖς κλήσεσι συμβαίνοντα, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,21*), before concluding with the collective terms “the Spirit’s perfection in all goodness” (τὴν ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τελειότητα, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,33–34*) “which is infinite, uncircumscribed and in no way limited” (*Maced GNO III.I. 94,32–33*). The characteristics of these names are: exaltedness, reference to that which is higher, clarity, piety, infinity, perfection.

Gregory contrasts this long series of descriptions of the pious concepts of the divine nature in which the Spirit fully shares, with “the absurdity of the opposites of these predicates” (τὸ ἀπεμφαῖνον τῶν ἀντιδιαστελλομένων τοῖς τοιούτοις ὀνόμασιν, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,9*). As his opponents reject the names that refer to that which is higher, they confess “all that is the opposite of these” (τὰ ἐναντία, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,13*). That which is the opposite of these testifies to every absurdity and blasphemy. “The characteristics and their names that extend into infinity” (ἐπὶ τὸ ἄπειρον ταῖς κλήσεσι συμβαίνοντα, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,21*) and belong perfectly to the Spirit as divine characteristics, are opposed by

89 Gregory only uses παραπληξία in his struggle against heretics (Pneumatomachi and Eunomius), see *Lexicon Gregorianum* VII, col. 114–115, s.v. παραπληξία. Παραπληξία appears once more in *Maced GNO III.I. 108,6*, when Gregory attacks people who think their human (in)capacity is higher than the dignity of the Spirit, and accuses them of pride (ὑπερηφάνια, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,8*): “Oh, their pitiable and miserable insanity! When they discuss these matters, they do not understand either what they are or what the Holy Spirit is, which they in their arrogance set in opposition to themselves!” (*Maced GNO III.I. 108,6–8*).

the assumption that his opponents make that the Spirit possesses these characteristics imperfectly (ἀτελῶς, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,19*) and that his goodness is limited (περιορισμένην, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,20*). If his opponents entertain the assumption that the Spirit could require completion or could be subject to diminution, they admit inferior ideas (ταῖς ἀτιμοτέραις τῶν ὑπολήψεων, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,29*). The characteristics of these names are: inferiority, absurdity, blasphemy, imperfection, limitedness.

Gregory yields not an inch to his opponents: his rhetorical argument enforces perfect opposition. Because of the divine nature, the divine characteristics are present in their fullness, perfect and infinite; no form of limitation is possible, because the assumption that there could be any limitation immediately leads to the conclusion that the nature to which these—limited—characteristics belong is not divine.

How does Gregory explain perfection?

Gregory describes perfection as the concept that admits of no increment or diminution, neither in space nor in time, and that is always as it is. He regularly adds “in all goodness” to perfection (ἐν τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,33*).⁹⁰ The divine is the fullness of the good, and is therefore in its nature the perfection of the good:

For we have learnt that the divine is for ever full of every good, or rather, is itself the fullness of all good things for ever, and is in need of no supplement to make it perfect, but is itself by its own nature the perfection of good. What is perfect is alien alike to increase and to diminution, and for this reason the perfection of good things attributed to the divine nature is, we say, always the same.⁹¹

In *Ref Eun*, Gregory attributes this perfection in goodness to each of the three divine persons separately *and* collectively:

For these names (sc. Father, Son, Holy Spirit) do not teach us any distinction in nature, but only the recognisable identities of the hypostases, so

⁹⁰ cf. *Maced GNO III.I. 91,7; 92,1–2; 95,8; 95,21; 95,29*.

⁹¹ *Eun III GNO II. 222,2–9*: ἡμεῖς γὰρ ἐμάθομεν ὅτι τὸ θεῖον αἰ παντὸς ἀγαθοῦ πλήρὲς ἐστίν, μᾶλλον δὲ αὐτὸ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἐστὶ τὸ πλήρωμα (ἀ)εὶ καὶ οὐδεμιᾶς προσθήκης εἰς τελείωσιν δέεται, ἀλλ’ αὐτὸ τῇ ἑαυτοῦ φύσει ἢ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ τελειότης ἐστὶ· τὸ δὲ τέλειον ἐπίσης αὐξήσεώς τε καὶ μείωσews ἡλλοτριῶται· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὴν ἐπιθεωρουμένην τῇ θεῖᾳ φύσει τῶν ἀγαθῶν τελειότητα πάντοτε φαμεν τὴν αὐτὴν εἶναι (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

that we know that the Father is not the Son, and the Son is not the Father, the Holy Spirit is not the Son or the Father, but we can know each in the specific characteristic of the hypostasis, in infinite perfection, both each viewed in itself and each not separated from those to which each is connected.⁹²

It is striking that Gregory repeatedly uses the concept of perfection in *Maced*, but it does not appear any more after the beginning of the section in which he describes the Spirit as the creator (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,21ff.).

Gregory had already indicated previously (*Maced* GNO III.I. 91,7–10; 92,2–5) that perfection knows of no deficiency and requires no addition. In the current section the Spirit is perfect, therefore, because he cannot be augmented by addition or lessened by subtraction. Gregory connects infinity and indescribability with perfection, and this in such a way that the perfection of the Spirit is not limited in any part, and is therefore incapable of being augmented or lessened. Because of this infinity, it is not possible either to describe perfection.⁹³ The absence of increment or diminution in perfection plays a crucial role in the following section, *Maced* GNO III.I. 95,1–26, where Gregory emphas-

92 *Ref Eun* GNO II. 317,25–318,2: διὰ γὰρ τῶν κλήσεων τούτων οὐ φύσεως διαφορὰν διδασκόμεθα, ἀλλὰ μόνας τὰς τῶν ὑποστάσεων γνωριστικὰς ιδιότητας· ὥστε γινώσκειν ἡμᾶς μήτε υἱὸν τὸν πατέρα εἶναι μήτε πατέρα τὸν υἱὸν μήτε υἱὸν ἢ πατέρα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ἀλλ' ἕκαστον ἐν τῷ ἰδιόζοντι τῆς ὑποστάσεως χαρακτηρὶ γνωρίζειν, ἐν ἀορίστῳ τελειότητι καὶ ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ θεωρούμενον καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ συνημμένου οὐ διαιρούμενον.

93 EKKEHARD MÜHLENBERG, *Die Unendlichkeit Gottes bei Gregor von Nyssa. Gregors Kritik am Gottesbegriff der klassischen Metaphysik*, Göttingen 1966, *passim*, demonstrates the importance of the concept of infinity for Gregory's understanding of God. MIHAIL NEAMȚU, *The Infinity of God and the Language of Perfection. A Reading of St. Gregory of Nyssa*, in: MIHAIL NEAMȚU & BOGDAN TĂTARU-CAZABAN (ed.), *Memory, Humanity, and Meaning. Selected Essays in Honor of Andrei Pleșu's Sixtieth Anniversary*, Bucharest 2009, 215–232, p. 220 says: "However, as Ekkehard Mühlenberg has rightly pointed out, Gregory of Nyssa was the first Christian theologian to have his entire understanding of God and the divine economy revolve around the notion of infinity." Gregory used it to distinguish himself from Greek philosophy, which denied the possibility of infinity. Elsewhere in his article, Neamțu points to the connection that Gregory draws between infinity and perfection. MARK WEEDMAN, *The Polemical Context of Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrine of Divine Infinity*, in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 18 (2010) 81–104, p. 104, had shown that the basis for Gregory's vision of divine infinity is a polemical context: "Divine infinity worked, in this context, because it allowed for a causal relationship between the Father and the Son (which preserves their distinction) outside of time (which preserves their unity). In other words, by properly conceiving of God as infinite, Pro-Nicenes came to believe that they could resolve the Trinitarian debate in ways that answered the homoian and Eunomian critiques."

ises the equality of the Spirit with the Father and the Son: the idea of perfection, logic teaches us, does not allow of increment or diminution.

4.5 *The Perfection of the Spirit Means He Is Logically Equal in Honour and Dignity to the Father and the Son (GNO III.I. 95,1–26)*

4.5.1 Greek Text

(95,1) Εἰ δὴ τοιοῦτον ἐστίν, ἐφεξῆς ὁ λόγος καὶ περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ ἴσον διασκεψάσθω καὶ περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὡσαύτως. ἄρ' οὐχὶ τὸ τέλειον ὁμολογεῖ τῆς τιμῆς καὶ ἐπὶ τούτου καὶ ἐπ' ἐκεῖνου; πάντας οἶμαι τοὺς νοῦν ἔχοντας τοῖς (95,5) εἰρημένοις συνθήσεσθαι. εἰ οὖν τελεία τοῦ πατρὸς ἡ τιμή, τελεία δὲ καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ, προσεμαρτυρήθη δὲ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι τῆς τιμῆς τὸ τέλειον, διὰ τί νομοθετοῦσιν ἡμῖν οἱ καινοὶ δογματισταὶ μὴ δεῖν ὁμολογεῖν ἐπ' αὐτοῦ πρὸς πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν τὸ ὁμότιμον; ἡμεῖς μὲν γὰρ τοῖς ἐξητας-(95,10) μένοις ἐπόμενοι τὸ μηδεμιᾶς προσθήκης εἰς τελείωσιν προσδεόμενον ἀτιμότερον ἑτέρου τινὸς οὔτε λέγειν οὔτε νοεῖν δυνάμεθα. οὐ γὰρ τὸ πλεονάζον οὐκ ἐξευρίσκει ὁ λόγος διὰ τὸ ἀνελλιπές τε καὶ τέλειον, ἐν τίνι καταλήψεται αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐλάττωσιν, οὐχ ὁρῶ. οἱ δὲ ἀπαγορεύοντες τὸ ὁμότιμον (95,15) δογματίζουσι πάντως τὸ ἀτιμότερον. καὶ πάσας καὶ ὡσαύτως κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν ἀκολουθίαν διὰ τῆς κατὰ τὴν σύγκρισιν ἐλαττώσεως ἐπὶ τὸ ἐναντίον τὰς εὐσεβεῖς ὑπολήψεις περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος παρατρέψουσι μὴ ἐν ἀγαθότητι μηδὲ ἐν δυνάμει μηδὲ ἐν ἄλλῳ τινὶ τῶν εὐσεβῶς περὶ αὐτοῦ λεγομένων (95,20) συμμαρτυροῦντες τὸ τέλειον. εἰ δὲ τὸ πρόδηλον τῆς ἀσεβείας ἐκκλίνοντες τὸ ἐν παντὶ τῷ κατὰ τὸ ἀγαθὸν λεγομένῳ νοήματι τέλειον ὁμολογοῦσιν, εἰπάτωσαν οἱ σοφοί, πῶς τελείου τέλειον ἢ τελειότερόν ἐστιν ἢ ἀτελέστερον· ἕως γὰρ ἂν ὁ τῆς τελειότητος ἐφαρμόζεται λόγος, οὔτε τὸ πλεον οὔτε τὸ (95,25) ἔλαττον ἐν τῇ τοῦ τελείου ἐννοίᾳ ὁ λογισμὸς οὗτος παραδέ-(95,26)χεται.

4.5.2 Translation

(95,1) If, indeed, this is the case, we must proceed next to examine the equivalent question concerning the Son and, likewise, concerning the Father. Do you not, then, acknowledge that the honor is perfect in these two cases? In my view, everyone with a brain will agree with this statement. So then, if the honor of the Father is perfect, the Son's also is perfect, and it has been testified that the Spirit is perfect in honor, then why do these new dogmatists dictate that we must not confess for the Spirit equal honor with Father and Son?

After all, for our part, following on our previous investigations, we are incapable of saying, or even of thinking, that something requiring absolutely no addition for its perfection can be less honorable than any other thing. For since reason cannot discover anything that could cause it to increase because it lacks nothing and is perfect, I cannot see how it could perceive any diminishment in any respect. When these people forbid "equal honor", they are actually pro-

claiming the doctrine of “less honor”. Likewise, by the same logical process, namely, through comparative reduction, they will transform all the pious ideas about the Spirit into their opposite, testifying that it is not perfect in goodness, power, or anything else that is reverently said of it. But if they, trying to avoid obvious impiety, confess its perfection in every concept associated with goodness, then let these wise ones tell us, how is one perfect being any more or less perfect than another? Surely as long as the idea of perfection applies, no calculation of excess or deficiency can be allowed in the idea of perfection.

4.5.3 Paraphrase

The perfection of the Spirit makes it incomprehensible that Gregory’s opponents refuse to confess that the Spirit is equal in honour and dignity to the Father and the Son. They deny the Spirit equal dignity and place him on a lower footing, while verbally acknowledging the perfection of the Spirit, thus, illogically, introducing excess and deficiency into the concept of perfection.

4.5.4 Sub-questions

What contrast does Gregory present here?

Gregory now finds himself in the field of full logic. He regards his own work so far as the result of his own investigation, which he takes seriously (τοῖς ἐξητασμένοις ἐπόμενοι, *Maced GNO III.I. 95,9–10*). After observing that, given the inquiry into the perfection of the Spirit, a similar inquiry into that of the Son and the Father is required (διασχεψάσθω, *Maced GNO III.I. 95,2*), he ultimately concludes: logical thinking (ὁ λογισμὸς οὗτος, *Maced GNO III.I. 95,25*) cannot, when it comes to the concept to perfection, accept any excess or deficiency, so that the honour and dignity of the Spirit in relation to those of the Father and the Son cannot be different.⁹⁴ Anyone with a brain (τοὺς νοῦν ἔχοντας, *Maced GNO III.I. 95,4*) will concur with his logical reasoning.⁹⁵ He calls those who would refuse the Spirit equal honour and dignity new dogmatists (οἱ καινοὶ δογματισταί, *Maced GNO III.I. 95,7–8*).⁹⁶ These people put forward the idea

94 Gregory offers a perfectly similar argument at the end of his *Epist XXIV* to Heracleianus, using almost the same words. In *Maced GNO III.I. 95,22–23*: εἰπάτωσαν οἱ σοφοί, πῶς τέλειου τέλειον ἢ τελειότερον ἐστὶν ἢ ἀτελέστερον; in *Epist XXIV GNO VIII.II. 78,24–25*: εἰ οὖν τέλειος ὁ υἱός, τέλειον καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα, τέλειου τέλειον οὔτε ἀτελέστερον οὔτε τελειότερον ἐπινόει ὁ λόγος.

95 HENRIETTE M. MEISSNER, *Rhetorik und Theologie*, 134 n. 30, has called the passage of *Maced GNO III.I. 95,1ff.* (and *Maced GNO III.I. 95,27–96,1*) an example of the rhetorical device of δι’ ὁμολογουμένων λόγῳ προσάγειν.

96 Gregory also uses the word δογματιστής in a pejorative sense elsewhere: in reference to the quasi-theologians in Constantinople (*Deit Fil GNO X.II. 120,19* and 125,9) and to Eunomius, who is called ὁ καινὸς οὗτος δογματιστής in *Ref Eun GNO II. 357,7*.

that the Spirit is of lower rank as a doctrine (δογματίζουσι, *Maced* GNO III.I. 95,15). They distort (παρὰτρέψουσι, *Maced* GNO III.I. 95,18) all pious ideas about the Holy Spirit, turning them into their opposite, even though they dodge and avoid open impiety. Gregory concludes this section on a note of sarcasm by calling them the ‘wise ones’ (οἱ σοφοί, *Maced* GNO III.I. 95,22), who, in their folly and contrary to the laws of reason, do not hesitate to accept gradations in perfection.⁹⁷ Οἱ σοφοί return in *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,27: the ironic description of people who reason mean-spiritedly about the honour which the Spirit deserves. In *Maced* GNO III.I. 99,22, shortly before this passage, in Gregory’s argument about the Spirit as the co-creator, the οἱ σοφοί are mentioned together with the mean-spiritedness of their thoughts.⁹⁸

The core of the contrast is: is the Spirit, or is he not, equal to the Son and the Father? Does the Spirit, or does he not, deserve the equal honour that is given to the Father and the Son? Gregory accuses his opponents of ascribing perfection to the Spirit (thus avoiding open impiety), but introducing excess and deficiency into perfection, so as to justify the lower place of the Spirit in relation to that of the Father and the Son.

4.6 *Because of Their Perfection the Spirit’s Fullness of Honour, like the Father’s and the Son’s, Is Not Dependent on Our Free Choice* (GNO III.I. 95,27–96,22)

4.6.1 Greek Text

(95,27) Εἰ οὖν διὰ πάντων τέλειον τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον εἶναι συντίθενται, ὡμολόγηται δὲ πρὸς τούτοις εὐσεβὲς εἶναι καὶ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ ἐν παντὶ ἀγαθῷ τέλειον, τίς ὁ λόγος, καθ’ ὃν εὐλογον κρίνουσι πάλιν ἀναιρεῖν ὃ δεδῶκασιν· τὸ γὰρ ἀναιρεῖν τὸ ὁμότιμον ἀπόδειξις ἐστὶ τοῦ μὴ νομίζειν (96,1) μετέχειν τῆς τελειότητος. αὐτὸ δὲ τοῦτο τὴν τιμὴν ἐπὶ τῆς θείας φύσεως τί ποτε ἄρα νομίζουσιν, ἧς ἄμοιρον εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα βούλονται; πότερον ταύτην φασὶν ἢν καὶ ἀνθρωποὶ ἀνθρώποις χαρίζονται λόγῳ τε θεραπεύοντες καὶ σχήματι, (96,5) τὸ ὑπήκοον ἐνδεικνύμενοι κατὰ τὴν πρόοδον καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα τῇ ματαίᾳ τοῦ βίου συνηθείᾳ τῷ τῆς τιμῆς γίνεται λόγῳ; ἅπερ πάντα τῇ προαιρέσει τῶν ταῦτα ἐργαζομένων συνέστηκεν· ὦν καθ’ ὑπόθεσιν μὴ προ-

97 WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen*, 73, has hypothesised that the Pneumatomachi did not fight the perfection of the Spirit, but regarded this perfection, like all other divine predicates, as a derived perfection: through participation (τῇ μετουσίᾳ τέλειον); not, like the Father and the Son, by nature (τῇ φύσει).

98 On several occasions in his *Eun*, Gregory ironically calls Eunomius ὁ σοφός. See *Lexicon Gregorianum* VIII, col. 145, s.v. σοφός. Eunomius’s followers are also called οἱ σοφοί, even σοφώτατοι.

ελομένων, οὐδεμίαν ἐκ φύσεως ἀφορμὴν ἔχει τῶν ἀνθρώπων οὐδεὶς εἰς τὸ εἶναι (96,10) τῶν λοιπῶν τιμιώτερος πάντων ὁμοίως κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ μέτρα τῆς φύσεως γνωριζομένων. σαφὴς δὲ ὁ λόγος καὶ οὐδεμίαν ἀμφιβολίαν ἔχων· τὸν γὰρ σήμερον διὰ τὴν ἀρχήν, ἥς προσέστηκε, τίμιον τοῖς πολλοῖς εἶναι δοκοῦντα εὐρήσομεν ἐφεξῆς ἓνα τῶν τιμώντων καὶ αὐτὸν γινόμενον τῆς ἀρχῆς (96,15) εἰς ἕτερον μετενεχθείσης. ἄρ' οὖν τοιοῦτόν τι τῆς τιμῆς εἶδος καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς θείας φύσεως ἐπινοοῦσιν, ὥστε βουλομένων μὲν ἡμῶν τὸ τίμιον ἔχειν, παυσασμένων δὲ τοῦ τιμᾶν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ προαιρέσει συγκαταλήγειν τὴν θείαν τιμὴν; ἢ καταγέλαστόν ἐστι καὶ ἀσεβὲς ἅμα τὰ τοιαῦτα νοεῖν; οὐ (96,20) γὰρ δι' ἡμᾶς τὸ θεῖον ἑαυτοῦ τιμιώτερον γίνεται, ἀλλ' αἰὲ ὡσαύτως ἔχει οὔτε πρὸς τὸ χεῖρον οὔτε πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον (96,22) μεταβῆναι δυνάμενον· τὸ μὲν γὰρ οὐ δέχεται, τὸ δὲ οὐκ ἔχει.

4.6.2 Translation

(95,27) So then, if they agree that the Holy Spirit is perfect in all respects, and it has been piously confessed in addition that the Father and the Son are perfect in every good thing, then according to what logic do they decide it's a good idea to take back what they have granted? Denying "equal honor" proves that they do not think (96) it partakes of perfection. For this very reason, therefore, what is the honor that they acknowledge in the case of the divine nature, but of which they insist the Spirit is devoid? Do they mean that honor which humans grant to other humans: flattering them with speech and gestures, showing their subordinate position in processions, and all such things that in the empty conventions of our world are done for the sake of honoring? All these practices rely upon the free choice* of the one who performs them. Where, hypothetically speaking, such freedom of choice*⁹⁹ is lacking, no human being has by nature any means to make herself more honorable than the rest, since all are similarly characterized by the same natural limits. The idea is clear and quite unambiguous. For we will find that the one who today seems to be honorable to the crowd because of the office over which he presides, will himself in turn

99 Translator Andre Radde-Gallwitz has explained his decision to translate *προαίρεσις* as *devotion* as follows: "Most basically, this term means 'preference' or 'choice', taking on technical significance starting with Aristotle. In several cases in this treatise Gregory uses the term more specifically for a worshiper's deferential attitude toward a superior. See Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, revised and augmented throughout by Sir Henry Stuart Jones with the assistance of Roderick McKenzie (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1940), s.v. *προαίρεσις* 8." I do not share Andre Radde-Gallwitz's view: I think his choice to translate *προαίρεσις* as *devotion* is not justified. I have explained my own decision to translate it as *freedom of choice* or *free choice* in the commentary.

become one of those giving honor, when the office is transferred to another. So then, do they conceive of this kind of honor even for the divine nature, such that it has honor whenever it pleases us, but the divine honor ceases along with our free choice* whenever we stop giving it honor? Or is it at once ridiculous and impious to think such things? After all, the divine does not become any more honorable than it already is through our actions, but rather it is always the same, since it can change neither for the worse nor for the better: it does not admit what is worse, and there is nothing better.

4.6.3 Paraphrase

It is ridiculous and impious to think that the fullness of honour of the divine nature is dependent on our free choice. Ascribing perfection to the Spirit means that the Spirit's fullness of honour, like the Father's and the Son's, is lasting, unchangeable, and independent of our free choice. Those who refuse to ascribe equal honour and dignity to the Spirit deny the perfection of the Spirit, and thus his divinity.

4.6.4 Sub-questions

What rhetorical structure does Gregory choose?

Gregory continues along the same path: demonstrating the absurdity of his opponents by asking questions. How can they refuse to give the Spirit equal honour and dignity as the Father and the Son, while acknowledging the perfection of the Spirit? In that case they deny the perfection of the Spirit. Worse still: what absurd and impious notion do they have of the honour due to the divine nature? They make this honour dependent on the free choice of human beings, who are able, given the equal dignity of every human being, to decide whether or not to render honour to a fellow human being, but who are unable to detract in any way from the divine nature's unchangeable fullness of honour. The divine nature always retains its honour, independently of our free choice, because of its unchangeability and perfection. That they detract from this is proof of the ridiculousness of his opponents's reasoning, as well as of their impiety. After the accusations of small-mindedness (τί μικρολογούσι περὶ τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῆς δόξης; *Maced GNO III.I. 93,18–19*) and absurdity and blasphemy (πάσης ἀτοπίας καὶ βλασφημίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,14*), even of supreme folly (τῆς ἐσχάτης παραπληξίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 94,31*), Gregory here accuses his opponents of a combination of ridiculousness and impiety, in the form of a rhetorical question: “Or is it at once ridiculous and impious to think such things?” (*Maced GNO III.I. 96,18–19*).

What distinction does Gregory make between the honour of human beings and the honour of God?

Because of the equal nature of all human beings, no human being is worthy of greater honour than any other human being, irrespective of the free choice of the human beings who give such honour.¹⁰⁰ The core of Gregory's argument is that human beings are equal in nature, and that human beings give honour to fellow human beings only on the basis of their free choice, on account of the fact that some of them for a while may hold an office of leadership. This honour ceases when the office is transferred to someone else; in fact, the persons who received fitting honour while in office then give honour to their successors. Gregory further highlights the ephemeral nature of human claims to honour by adding that persons who temporarily exercise an office attempt to impress upon the masses that they are worthy of honour (τίμιον τοῖς πολλοῖς εἶναι δοκοῦντα, *Maced GNO III.I. 96,13*). Immediately beforehand, Gregory speaks rather disparagingly about the honour that human beings give to their fellow human beings: the expressions of honour arise from silly conventions of life (τῇ ματαιᾷ τοῦ βίου συνηθείᾳ, *Maced GNO III.I. 96,6*). Being worthy of honour, for human beings, is therefore a fleeting quality that is utterly dependent on fellow human beings' προαίρεσις.

God's fullness of honour, that of the divine nature, and therefore also of the divine persons, is not dependent on the free choices of human beings. God would not cease to be full of honour if we human beings were to stop giving God honour. The key issue for Gregory is the perfection of the divine nature: given God's perfection, God's fullness of honour cannot be increased or diminished.

What conclusion does Gregory draw concerning the Spirit?

It is not possible both to acknowledge the divinity of the Spirit and to make the Spirit's fullness of honour dependent on the free choice of human beings. If the Spirit possesses the divine nature (and this is what his opponents accept), then the acknowledgement of the divinity of the Spirit, given the perfection of the divine nature and therefore of the divine persons, automatically also entails the acknowledgement that the Spirit is full of honour in a way that is not dependent on the free choice of human beings, and that is equal to that of the Father and the Son.

100 BERNARD POTTIER, *Dieu et le Christ selon Grégoire de Nysse*, Namur 1994, 369, has pointed out the similarity between this passage and the beginning of the 4th homily of *Eccl GNO V. 334,5–338,22* where Gregory emphasises the equal nature and equality of dignity of all human beings, and rejects slavery on these grounds.

4.7 *Honouring the Attributes of God and Thus of the Spirit in a Worthy Manner Adds Nothing to God's Fullness of Honour (GNO III.I. 96,23–97,20)*

4.7.1 Greek Text

(96,23) Τίνι τοίνυν τρόπῳ τιμήσεις τὸ θεῖον; πῶς ὑψώσεις τὸ ὑψιστον; πῶς δοξάσεις τὸ ὑπὲρ πᾶσαν δόξαν; πῶς ἐπαινέσεις (96,25) τὸ ἀκατάληπτον; εἰ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ὡς σταγῶν ἀπὸ κάδου, καθὼς φησιν Ἡσαΐας, ἐὰν πᾶσα ἡ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ζωὴ συναρμολογηθεῖσα ὁμόφωνον ἀναπέμψῃ τὴν δόξαν, τίς ἔσται προσθήκη τῷ κατὰ τὴν φύσιν ἐνδόξῳ τῆς σταγόνος ἡ χάρις; Οἱ οὐρανοὶ διηγούνται τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ μικροὶ (96,30) κήρυκες τῆς ἀξίας νομίζονται· Ὅτι ἐπήρθη ἡ μεγαλοπρέπεια αὐτοῦ, οὐ μέχρι τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἀλλ' ὑπεράνω τῶν οὐρανῶν, τῶν μικρῶ μέρει τῆς θεότητος τῇ σπιθαμῇ τρο-(97,1)πικῶς ὀνομαζόμενῃ περιειλημμένων. καὶ ἄνθρωπος, τὸ ἐπύκνον τοῦτο καὶ ὠκύμορον ζῶον, καλῶς τῷ χόρτῳ προσεικασμένος, σήμερον ὦν καὶ αὔριον οὐκ ἐσόμενος, ἀξίως τιμῆσαι τὴν θεϊὰν φύσιν πεπίστευκεν; ὅμοιον ὥσπερ ἂν εἴ (97,5) τις ἐξάψας λεπτήν ἴνα ἀπὸ στιππύου προσθήκῃ τινὰ ταῖς τοῦ ἡλίου μαρμαρυγαῖς διὰ τοῦ σπινθήρος ὑπολαμβάνοι χαρίζεσθαι. τί λέγων εἰπέ μοι τιμήσεις, ἐὰν περ ὅλως τιμῆσαι θελήσεις τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον; ὅτι ἀθάνατόν ἐστι πάντως, ὅτι ἄτρεπτόν τε καὶ ἀναλλοιώτον καὶ αἰεὶ καλὸν καὶ ἀπροσδεές (97,10) τῆς ἐτέρωθεν χάριτος, ὅτι πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργεῖ καθὼς βούλεται, ἅγιον, ἡγεμονικόν, εὐθές, δίκαιον, ἀληθινόν, τὰ βᾶθῃ ἐρευνῶν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον, καὶ εἴ τι τοιοῦτον. τί οὖν διὰ τούτων καὶ τῶν τοιούτων χαρίζῃ; τὰ προσόντα λέγεις ἢ διὰ τῶν μὴ (97,15) προσόντων τιμᾶς; εἰ μὲν γὰρ τὰ μὴ προσόντα προσμαρτυρεῖς, ματαῖα ἡ χάρις καὶ εἰς οὐδὲν φέρουσα πλέον· ὁ γὰρ τὸ πικρὸν γλυκὺ λέγων, αὐτὸς μὲν ἐψεύσατο, τὸ δὲ ψεκτὸν οὐκ ἐπῆνεσεν. εἰ δὲ τὰ ὄντα λέγεις, τῇ φύσει τοιοῦτόν ἐστι πάντως καὶ ὁμολογούντος καὶ μὴ· φησὶ γὰρ ὁ ἀπόστολος ὅτι Εἰ (97,20) ἀπιστοῦμεν, ἐκεῖνος πιστὸς μένει.

4.7.2 Translation

(96,23) So then, by what method will you honor the divine? How will you exalt the exalted one? How will you glorify the one that is above all glorification? How will you praise the inconceivable? Seeing that “all the nations are like a drop from a bucket” (Is 40:15), as Isaiah says, if all living humans were to send forth glorification in a single harmonious voice, what will the drop's homage add to what is glorious by nature? “The heavens declare the glory of God” (Ps LXX 18:2) and they are considered to be meager heralds of his dignity because “his majesty is exalted” not merely as far as the heavens, but “above the heavens” (Ps LXX 8:2), which are enclosed in this tiny part of the deity that is figuratively called the “width of his hand” (Is 40:12) (97) And the human being, this mortal and perishing animal, is rightly likened to “grass”, since he

is “here today” and “gone tomorrow” (Mt 6:30). Does a human being believe that she can honor the divine nature in a worthy manner? That would be just like someone lighting a tiny fiber of flax on fire and thinking that, because of the spark, he added something to the flashing rays of the sun! Tell me, what will you say to honor the Holy Spirit—assuming that you actually wish to do so? Surely you will say that it is immortal; that it is immutable, unchanging, always “good” (Ps LXX 142:10), with no need for homage from any other; that it “produces all things in all as it wishes” (1 Cor 12:6, 11), is “holy” (for example, Ps LXX 50:13), “ruling” (Ps LXX 50:14, 142:10; Jn 16:13), “righteous” (Ps LXX 50:12), “just” (cf. Rom 8:10), “true” (cf. Jn 15:26, 16:13), “searching the depths of God” (1 Cor 2:10), “proceeding from the Father” (Jn 15:26), “receiving” from the Son (Jn 16:15), and anything else like this. Well then, what sort of homage do you offer to it when you use these names and others like them? Are you affirming what belongs to it or are you giving honor by means of what does not belong to it? If you attest what does not belong to it, your homage is empty and comes to nothing more. After all, if someone calls something bitter “sweet”, he himself is a liar, and he fails by praising what should be blamed. If, however, you affirm what is the case, the Spirit is certainly that way by nature, whether you confess it or not. Indeed, the apostle says that “even if we are unfaithful, he remains faithful”.¹⁰¹

4.7.3 Paraphrase

Nothing in creation, including mortal human beings, can add anything to God’s fullness of honour, He who is far exalted above creation. By uttering the attributes of the Spirit that characterise his divine nature and his interwovenness with the Father and the Son, human beings honour the Spirit, but all they do is speak about the characteristics that are present with the Spirit; they do not add anything to the Spirit’s fullness of honour.

4.7.4 Sub-questions

In what terms does Gregory describe God’s exaltedness?

By contrast to the inability of human beings and of all of creation to fittingly honour God’s exaltedness, Gregory extensively describes God’s exaltedness,

¹⁰¹ 2 Tim 2:13. I will not distinguish here between letters whose Pauline authorship is undisputed, and letters where it is disputed (e.g. the letters to Timothy and Titus). Gregory did not doubt that Paul was the author and therefore unreservedly quoted from these letters with the addition *as the Apostle says*. Paul’s authority was so great in his eyes (and in those of many Church Fathers) that Gregory referred to him simply as *the Apostle*, without mentioning his name.

which is defined as that which is full of glory by nature (τῷ κατὰ τὴν φύσιν ἐνδόξῳ, *Maced GNO III.I.* 96,28), a glory to which limited human beings can add nothing when they honour it. He begins by underlining the powerlessness of human beings by portraying human limitations in contrast with the divine as the all-transcendent. Gregory begins his description of the exaltedness of the Spirit by asking rhetorical questions full of evocation, to which the answer can only be that human beings in giving honour can never bridge the gulf that separates God and humankind given God's perfection and human imperfection. Gregory immediately effects this emotionally charged evocation through the alliteration of the opening questions πῶς ὑψώσεις τὸ ὑψιστον; πῶς δοξάσεις τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων δόξαν; (*Maced GNO III.I.* 96,23–24). Gregory continues this evocation in the comparison, based on Is 40:15, of the peoples to drops from a bucket. The same passage in Isaiah (40:12) also provides the comparison (τροπικῶς, *Maced GNO III.I.* 96,32–97,1) of the heavens that God holds between his thumb and index finger.¹⁰² Comparisons from Scripture help him describe the greatness of God. Chapter 40 of Isaiah is especially suited to this, because this chapter in particular shows God's exaltedness as towering above the heavens. Nor is it without reason that comparisons appear precisely at this point: faced with the exaltedness of God, human language gets embarrassed and seeks a solution in comparisons, for which Scripture provides rich material.

In what terms does Gregory describe the limitations of human beings?

Gregory augments the distance that separates human beings and the exalted God by using images to describe not only the exaltedness of God, but also human beings themselves in their transience. First of all, he describes the human being as “this living being that is perishable and swiftly dies”, using non-biblical terms for this: τὸ ἐπίκηρον τοῦτο καὶ ὠκύμορον ζῶον (*Maced GNO III.I.* 97,1–2). The use of ὠκύμορον is striking, because ὠκύμορος is a famous epithet from Homer's *Iliad*. Thetis, Achilles's mother, uses this epithet on a number of occasions to describe her son's disastrous fate (*Iliad* 1,417; 18,95; 18,458; in *Iliad* 1,505, Thetis uses the superlative ὠκυμωρότατος), and this was later often used on the tombs of people who had died young. The consciousness of human transience is enhanced for the reader in the following comparison of human beings to grass that grows only briefly. Gregory again uses the 40th chapter of Isaiah for this (LXX 40:6–7), a quotation that also appears literally in 1 Pet 1:24: Πᾶσα σὰρξ χόρτος, καὶ πᾶσα δόξα ἀνθρώπου ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου· ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος

102 Gregory repeatedly uses this comparison: *Hex GNO IV.I.* 58,13; *Or Dom III SC* 398,8; *GNO VII.I.* 34,17; *Sanct Pasch GNO IX.I.* 256,22; *Cant II GNO VI.* 68,12; *Eun III GNO II.* 145,18; *Ref Eun GNO II.* 366,13–14 and 381,2.

ἐξέπεσεν.¹⁰³ In Ps LXX 102:15 (ἄνθρωπος, ὥσει χόρτος αἱ ἡμέραι αὐτοῦ· ὥσει ἄνθος τοῦ ἀγροῦ, οὕτως ἐξανθήσει), too, human beings are compared in the same terms with grass that grows only for a short time. In a further definition of human beings, Gregory refers to Mt 6:30/Lk 12:28. Gregory uses the modifier: σήμερον ὦν καὶ αὔριον οὐκ ἐσόμενος—“who is here today and gone tomorrow” in respect of human beings. This modifier is almost identical to that which Matthew and Luke use in relation to grass: σήμερον ὄντα καὶ αὔριον εἰς κλίβανον βαλλόμενον—“that grows in the field today and is thrown into the furnace tomorrow”. Later on, in *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,6–17, Gregory repeats his view of the transience of human beings, who are placed even more sharply in contrast with the exaltedness of the Holy Spirit and the accompanying circle of glorification within the Trinity:

Oh, their pitiable and miserable insanity! When they discuss these matters, they do not understand either what they are or what the Holy Spirit is, which they in their arrogance set in opposition to themselves! Who should tell these people: they are human beings, a “spirit that proceeds and does not return”, who make their home in their mother’s womb through a filthy conception and all of them—all of them!—come forth into a filthy earth, where they get a life that is comparable to grass? After blossoming for a little while in a common illusion, they once again wither, and their flower falls away around them and disappears. Nor do they accurately know what they are before their birth and to what end they will return, since the soul is ignorant of its lot as long as it remains in the flesh. This is the state of human beings.

Does Gregory believe human beings are able to honour the divine nature in a worthy manner?

In view of the modifiers used in relation to human beings to indicate their swift mortality, Gregory’s following question:

And the human being, this mortal and perishing animal, is rightly likened to ‘grass’, since he is ‘here today’ and ‘gone tomorrow’. Does a human being believe that she can honor the divine nature in a worthy manner?

Maced GNO III.I. 97,3–4

¹⁰³ Is 40:6–7, and therefore 1Pet 1:24, are also favourite Scriptural passages of Gregory’s: *Cant* V GNO VI. 169,5; *Flacill* GNO IX. 484,19; *Melet* IX. 447,2–4; *Virg* GNO VIII.I. 270,16–19; *Beat* VII GNO VII.II. 149,26–28. In *Virg* VIII.I. 270,16–19, the grass is similarly described as σήμερον ὄντα καὶ αὔριον οὐκ ἐσόμενον.

is rhetorical. Gregory gives the expected answer in the form of a striking comparison:

That would be just like someone lighting a tiny fiber of flax on fire and thinking that, because of the spark, he added something to the flashing rays of the sun!

Maced GNO III.I. 97,4–7

In *Virg* GNO VIII.I. 289,19–26, Gregory likens the relation between the all-transcending beauty of God and human beauty to that between the great radiance of the sun and a small spark: Τίς γάρ ὀλίγῳ σπινθήρι προσεικάζει τὸν ἥλιον ...; (*Virg* GNO VIII.I. 289,19–20). In this passage, Gregory indicates that human beings who have seen a glimpse of God's beauty do not have words adequate to describe this beauty.

Are human beings able to render full honour to the Holy Spirit in words?

Given the characteristics of the Spirit, which do not depend on their attribution to him by human beings, human beings, though they can rightly utter the many names of the Spirit, cannot by doing so add anything to the honour of the Spirit, which he has by nature on the basis of his essential characteristics. Whether or not we acknowledge his divine characteristics and utter these does not detract from or add to his divine nature. Gregory confirms this by quoting a passage from 2 Tim 2:13: Εἰ ἀπιστοῦμεν, ἐκεῖνος πιστὸς μένει (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,19–20). Yet Gregory seizes the opportunity to produce a long series of epithets of the Spirit in the context of this argument, epithets that characterise the Spirit and contain information about his *processio*.

What characteristics does Gregory ascribe to the Spirit?

On the basis of the Scriptural characteristics mentioned by Gregory in *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,10–13 (πάντα ἐν πάσιν ἐνεργεῖ καθὼς βούλεται, ἄγιον, ἡγεμονικόν, εὐθές, δίκαιον, ἀληθινόν, τὰ βάρη ἐρευνῶν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον), Gregory begins with a list of terms that do not have any direct Scriptural basis: ἀθάνατον, ἄτρεπτον, ἀναλλοίωτον, αἰὶ καλόν and ἀπροσδεές.¹⁰⁴

Gregory calls the Spirit *immortal* (ἀθάνατον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,8). He uses this term for all three divine persons. In the exposition of the faith ascribed to Gregory Thaumaturgus, but probably written partly by Gregory himself, which is included in *Thaum* GNO X.I. 17,24–19,5, the Son is called the immortal Son

104 Cf. VOLKER DRECOLL, *Le substrat biblique*, 142.

of the Immortal One: (καὶ) ἀθάνατος ἀθανάτου.¹⁰⁵ In *Virg* GNO VIII.I. 305,2, the Spirit is called ἄφθαρτον καὶ ζωοποιὸν καὶ ἀθάνατον.

Gregory calls the Spirit “not subject to mutation and change” (ἄτρεπτόν τε καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,9). Again, he uses these terms for all three divine persons. In the concluding sentence of the exposition of the faith in *Thaum* GNO X.I. 19,4 the Trinity is called ἄτρεπτός τε καὶ ἀναλλοίωτος. In *Ref Eun* GNO II. 400,3, Gregory says that, according to Scripture, the following must be attributed to Father and Son and Spirit: τὸ ἄφθαρτόν τε καὶ ἄτρεπτον.

Gregory calls the Spirit “ever beautiful and good” (ἀεὶ καλὸν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,9). God’s nature is called ἡ τοῦ καλοῦ φύσις (*An et res* GNO III.III. 68,13). By using the predicate ἀεὶ καλὸν, Gregory repeats what he said in *Maced* GNO III.I. 94,15–21:

then it is clear that those who are pious will give their assent to the more distinct names and concepts for the Holy Spirit and will say that these are the ones which we have often mentioned: honorable, powerful, glorious, good, and any other term that fosters piety. Now, these realities do not belong to the Spirit in an imperfect manner. Nor do they possess a limited amount of goodness, but rather without any limit they correspond with their terms.

Compared to *Maced* GNO III.I. 94,15–21, Gregory repeats only καλὸν in *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,8–13. The latter passage contains a new series of predicates.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ FRANCESCO CELIA, *Preaching the Gospel to the Hellenes: the Life and Works of Gregory the Wonderworker*, PhD Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam 2017, 255, believes it is probable that the first and second articles of the faith, on the Father and the Son, were composed by Gregory Thaumaturgus, but that the third article, on the Spirit, is a combination of texts by Gregory Thaumaturgus and Gregory of Nyssa, while the fourth, on the Trinity, is entirely by the Nyssan.

¹⁰⁶ I have purposely translated καλὸν as *beautiful and good* because for Gregory the beautiful and the good converge in God. In *Diem lum*, baptised persons who read Scripture Christologically are on their way to the beauty of the beginning, it is a return. As the philosopher hopes to become wise due to his love of wisdom, so the baptised and redeemed person, as φιλόκαλος, i.e. lover of the beauties of Easter, will ultimately become καλός, i.e. beautiful and good again thanks to God. In *Diem lum* GNO IX. 230,16–17, Gregory speaks of τοὺς φιλοκάλους. The classical place of φιλόκαλος is Plato’s *Phaedrus* 248 d, which deals with the non-divine souls and their destiny. The soul “that has contemplated the most will be planted in the germ of a man, who will once develop into a philosopher, or a lover of beauty, or a servant of the Muses, or of Eros” (ἀλλὰ τὴν μὲν πλείστα ἰδοῦσαν εἰς γονὴν ἀνδρὸς γενησομένου φιλοσόφου ἢ φιλοκάλου ἢ μουσικοῦ τινος καὶ ἐρωτικοῦ, Burnet, *Platonis Opera* II, 248 d, Oxford 1967). Φιλόκαλος appears to be an aspect of the φιλόσοφος. The same com-

Gregory calls the Spirit *without need of any gift from others* (ἀπροσδεές τῆς ἐτέρωθεν χάριτος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,9–10). Gregory does say elsewhere of the divine nature that it is without want (for instance *Eun* II GNO I. 388,17–18 the divine is called τὸ γὰρ ἀπροσδεές τῇ φύσει καὶ τέλειον καὶ ἀπέριτον). Here in *Maced*, the addition τῆς ἐτέρωθεν χάριτος is conspicuous, because it is precisely the Spirit who is the giver of gifts, as Gregory argues later, *Maced* GNO III.I. 105,14–18:

Either the Spirit does not provide these goods to others, since it does not have them in its own nature, or if one believes that the Spirit does give them, he has undoubtedly already conceded that it has them. And this is a unique and distinctive feature of the divine nature alone, namely, to provide goods while standing in need of nothing external.

Gregory says of the Spirit: “for he produces all things in all as he wishes” (ὅτι πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργεῖ καθὼς βούλεται, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,10–11). This is a quotation from Paul in the 12th chapter of 1 Cor: “There are many different expressions of special power, but in everybody it is the same God who produces them all.” (ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς θεός, ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν, 1 Cor 12:6). “All these gifts are given by one and the same Spirit, who distributes them to each individual at will.” (πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα διαιροῦν ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται, 1 Cor 12:11). The phrase ὅτι πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργεῖ καθὼς βούλεται returns in *Maced* GNO III.I. 99,15, where Gregory discusses the full participation of the Spirit in creation. And in a new enumeration in *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,12–20 of

bination can be found in Plato's *Symposium* 209 e ff. and in his *Republic* 403 c; see the commentary by GERRIT J. DE VRIES, *A Commentary on the Phaedrus of Plato*, Amsterdam 1969, 143. Gregory was probably influenced in this by Plotinus, at least by the *Enneads* 1.6, where Plotinus uses the good and the beautiful without distinction (by contrast with *Enneads* 5 and 6). Gregory does not conceive of the Trinity in Plotinian terms, but the influence of Plotinus (and Porphyry and Iamblichus) in the underlying foundations of Gregory's and also Basil's Trinitarian theology is clear. See for Plotinus's possible influence on Gregory, ANTHONY MEREDITH, The Good and the Beautiful in Gregory of Nyssa, in: H. EISENBERGER (ed.), *EPHNEYMATA. Festschrift für Hadwig Hörner zum sechzigsten Geburtstag*, Heidelberg 1990, 133–145; KEVIN CORRIGAN, Οὐσία and ὑπόστασις in the Trinitarian Theology of the Cappadocian Fathers: Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, in: *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum* 12 (2008) 114–134. ANTHONY MEREDITH, The Divine Simplicity: *Contra Eunomium* I 223–241, in: MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium 1—An English Translation with Supporting Studies* (VCS 148), Leiden 2018, (357–370) 368–369, has shown the difference between Plotinus and Gregory in relation to infinity and simplicity. Plotinus ascribes these to the first of the three hypostases, the One, while Gregory ascribes them to the divine nature, as expressed in the three persons of the Trinity.

the qualities of the Spirit, who on this basis deserves adoration like the Father and the Son:

For the one that by nature is ‘ruler’ rules, the one that ‘produces all things in all’ holds power (δυναστεύει δὲ τὸ πάντα ἐνεργοῦν ἐν πᾶσιν), and the one that authoritatively ‘distributes the gifts as it wishes’ possesses authority. It benefits us by giving us life. It shows us mercy by redeeming us. It makes us gods by bringing us to God. It adopts us by bringing us into affinity with Christ and giving us the kingdom. It raises the dead, lifts up the fallen, and sets the wanderer on the right path. It keeps the one standing firm steadfast; it brings the one who has died to the resurrection.

Gregory is strongly attached to the Scriptural passage in 1Cor 12. In *Maced GNO III.L* 109, 16–19, in his argument about the harmonious involvement of the three divine persons in every good thing for human beings, Gregory characterises the Spirit as the one who makes complete:

So then, since the majesty of the Spirit is so great, and since any beautiful and good thing that comes from God through the Only-Begotten is made complete in the Spirit that ‘produces all things in all’ (ἐν τῷ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργοῦντι πνεύματι), why do they incite themselves to battle against their own life?

Gregory calls the Spirit *holy* (ἅγιον, *Maced GNO III.L* 97, 11). He uses ἅγιον almost as an *epitheton ornans* for the Spirit.¹⁰⁷ In what follows, the holiness of the Spirit, equal to that of the Father and the Son, is the foundation of all further predicates ascribed to the Spirit:

But the Holy Spirit, first of all, which comes from those who are holy by nature, is precisely what the Father is, holy by nature, and the Son likewise. So too the Holy Spirit. And, correspondingly, it is ‘life-giving’, incorruptible, unchangeable, eternal, ‘just’, ‘wise’, ‘righteous’, ‘ruling’, ‘good’, ‘powerful’, the giver of all good things and, above all, of life itself. Though it is everywhere, it is present to each; though it fills the earth, it remains in the heavens; poured out among the supercelestial powers, it fills all things according to the dignity of each while it remains full; it is with all who are worthy yet not separated from the Holy Trinity. It always searches the

107 For the many places in Gregory’s oeuvre, see *Lexicon Gregorianum* 1, col. 49–50, s.v. ἅγιος.

depths of God, always receives from the Son; it is sent forth and not separated; it is glorified and has glory.

Maced GNO III.I. 108,18–30

Gregory calls the Spirit *ruling* (ἡγεμονικόν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,11). This is an important concept for the development of his argument. In *Maced* GNO III.I. 103,29–104,3, the predicate ἡγεμονικόν is distinctive for the Spirit as the one who belongs to the Father and the Son and shares in the divine nature of the Trinity. Again, Gregory rules out any intermediate position for the Spirit:

But if it is shown to be a ruler (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν) because it is included ‘in the majesty of the kingdom’, what need is there to bring it all the way down to vulgar and slavish lowliness, ranking it with the servile creation? Actually, it is quite impossible for both these two claims about it to be true: that it is ruling (ἡγεμονικόν) and subordinate (ὑποχείριον). If it rules (ἡγεῖται), it has no lord. If it is a servant, it is no longer included with the royal nature.

In the phrase *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,12–14, which has been quoted above, Gregory connects the leading principle of the Spirit with his autonomy in dispensing the gifts of grace:

For the one that by nature is ‘ruler’ (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν τῇ φύσει) rules, the one that ‘produces all things in all’ holds power, and the one that authoritatively ‘distributes the gifts as it wishes’ possesses authority.

Here, too, Gregory follows Scripture, specifically Ps LXX 50:12–14 and 1Cor 12:6,11, as he mentions in *Ref Eun* GNO II. 395,19–24:

But as the prophet (sc. David) calls the Holy Spirit good and righteous and ruling, thus, by calling him ruling, designating his nature as reigning (διὰ τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ τὸ ἀρχικὸν ἐνδεικνύμενος), so the Apostle (sc. Paul), in observing that the Spirit produces everything in everybody at will, firmly attributes to the dignity of the Spirit the autonomous aspect of his power.¹⁰⁸

108 *Ref Eun* GNO II. 395,19–24: ἀλλ’ ὥσπερ ὁ προφῆτης ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐθὲς καὶ ἡγεμονικὸν ὀνομάζει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, διὰ τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ τὸ ἀρχικὸν ἐνδεικνύμενος, οὕτω καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργεῖν καθὼς βούλεται διοριζόμενος τὴν αὐθεντικὴν ἐξουσίαν προσμαρτυρεῖ τῇ ἀξίᾳ τοῦ πνευμάτος.

In the continuation of *Ref Eun* GNO II. 400,1–7, a series of predicates, including τὸ ἄτρεπτον, τὸ εὐθές καὶ τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν καὶ τὸ πάντα ἐν πάσιν ἐνεργοῦν καθὼς βούλεται mentioned here in *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,9–11, is attributed both to the Father and the Son and to the Spirit, thus proving the homogeneity of the three divine persons. The meditation on the Spirit as kingship personified (βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 102,27–28) demonstrates the importance of ascribing this epithet (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν) to the Spirit. Perhaps Gregory uses this epithet as a good alternative for attributing the title κύριον to the Spirit, which he avoids in this work.

Gregory calls the Spirit *righteous* (εὐθές, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,11), following the example of Ps LXX 50:12. In *Eust* GNO III.I. 7,26, too, predicates such as εὐθές and ἡγεμονικόν are ascribed to the Spirit, who stands on the same level as the Father and the Son.

Gregory calls the Spirit *just* (δίκαιον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,11). This predicate that is customarily attributed to God, is also included in *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,22 as a predicate of the Spirit.

Gregory calls the Spirit *true* (ἀληθινόν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,11). This predicate that is customarily attributed to God following the example of Ps LXX 85:15, is also applied on innumerable occasions to the Father and the Son.¹⁰⁹ Sporadically, possibly in view of Jn 14:17 and Jn 15:26 (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας), the Spirit is explicitly given the predicate ἀληθινόν, for instance in *Ref Eun* GNO II. 317,2, where the intimate connection between the Spirit and Christ, and therefore also with the Father is demonstrated, and thus also the necessity of believing in the Father *and* the Son *and* the Spirit.

Gregory says of the Spirit: *fathoming the depths of God* (τὰ βάθη ἐρευνῶν τοῦ θεοῦ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,11–12), following the example of Paul's 1 Cor 2:10: τὸ γὰρ πνεῦμα πάντα ἐραυνᾷ, καὶ τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ.¹¹⁰ This is a modifier that is applied only to the Spirit. In *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,29–30, in the long list of modifiers *ad intra* and *ad extra*, this modifier, with the addition *always*, is followed by the affirmation that the Spirit

109 One prime example is *Eun* III GNO II. 83,27–29: “Given this characteristic teaching of the church, that the Only-begotten God is in his being true God from the being of the true God, ...” (ταῦτα τοίνυν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἰδιωτικῶς διδασκούσης, ὅτι ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ θεοῦ ἀληθινὸς θεὸς κατ’ οὐσίαν ὁ μονογενὴς ἐστὶ θεός, transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL). See also *Lexicon Gregorianum* I, col. 193–197, s.v. ἀληθινός.

110 This is an implicit response by Gregory to the Pneumatomachi. They used the quotation from Paul as a Scriptural reference to the limited nature of the Spirit. He searches, but does not immediately understand: see Epiphanius *Ancoratus* 15,1 (K. HOLL [ed.], *Epiphanius, Ancoratus and Panarion haer. 1–33* [Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte N.F. 10], Berlin 2013 erw. Nachdr. 1915).

always receives from the Son; it is sent forth and not separated; it is glorified and has glory.

In *Eun* 11 GNO I. 289,2–3 and 8–9, the modifier of 1Cor 2:10 functions as supporting evidence for the belief used against Eunomius that the Spirit, like the Son, does not receive verbal instruction from the Father, as Eunomius falsely assumed.

In this passage of *Maced*, Gregory makes a certain choice in attributing predicates to the Spirit. Gregory is led in his decision by the reason why predicates must be so attributed at this point in the argument: the relation between the honour of the Spirit and the human rendering of honour. After emphasising the exaltedness of God by contrast with the limitedness of human beings, he asks the reader what human beings could say about the Spirit that might add to the honour he has by nature, independent of what people say.

Gregory ends with the conclusion:

If, however, you affirm what is the case (τὰ ὄντα), the Spirit is certainly that way by nature, whether you confess it or not.

Maced GNO III.I. 97,18–19

Gregory has chosen his predicates in such a way that they emphatically show the Spirit as sharing in the divine nature: characteristics that are not dependent on human acknowledgement, but that are concomitant with the divine nature, from *ad intra*: from ἀθανάτων (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,8) up to and including ἀπροσδεὲς τῆς ἐτέρωθεν χάριτος (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,9–10), to *ad extra*: from ὅτι πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργεῖ καθὼς βούλεται (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,10–11) up to and including ἀληθινόν (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,11), and then returning to *ad intra*: τὰ βᾶθη ἐρευνῶν τοῦ θεοῦ (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,11–12).¹¹¹ Gregory concludes with a quotation from 2Tim 2:13: “if we are faithless, he is faithful still.” Gregory omits the following passage in 2Tim 2:13 (“for he cannot disown his own self”, ἀρνήσασθαι γὰρ ἑαυτὸν οὐ δύναται).

111 GIULIO MASPERO, *Trinity and Man*, 182 n. 117, has rightly pointed to the similar structure in the prologue to John's Gospel: from *ad intra* (Jn 1:1) to *ad extra* and then back to *ad intra* in Jn 1:18. Maspero calls this a “marvelous circular structure which seems to have marked Nyssian thought”.

What does Gregory say about the processio of the Spirit?

Again, Gregory's starting point is as follows: in view of the honour of the Spirit and the honour that human beings give to the Spirit, he uses his affirmations about the *processio* of the Spirit to emphasise the latter's participation in the divine nature, so that the Spirit is separated diastemically from creation, and is therefore not dependent for his honour on the honour that people render. In the continuation of *Maced* it will become clear how determinative this naturally present honour of the Spirit is to the content of this treatise: it will transpire that the Spirit is the glory of God personified! After he has mentioned a very specific attribute of the Spirit, an attribute that concerns the immanence of the Trinity: "fathoming the depths of God" (τὰ βάθη ἐρευνῶν τοῦ θεοῦ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,11–12), Gregory proceeds to add statements about the relationship with the Father and the Son, statements that confirm the honour of the Spirit, which is independent of human beings:

'proceeding from the Father' (Jn 15:26), 'receiving' from the Son (Jn 16:15), and anything else like this.

Maced GNO III.I. 97,12–13

In Jn 15:26 we read: τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας ὃ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται. Instead of παρὰ, Gregory uses ἐκ, like the creed of the Council of Constantinople of 381 does (τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον). Inspired no doubt by 1 Cor 2:12 (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ), and following Basil in his letter *Ep.* 125.3,¹¹² Gregory here echoes Epiphanius, who in his first, he believes traditional, formula on the Spirit in his 374 work *Ancoratus* 119 says: τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον. In his second formula, one which he composed himself, he adds καὶ ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον καὶ πιστευόμενον immediately after ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον.¹¹³ In *Ref Eun* GNO II. 392,6, too, Gregory quotes Jn 15:26, but there he uses the literal text: ὃ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται. Gregory comments here that Jesus did not say this about any creature. This is an indication that the Spirit belongs to the divine nature. In *Graec* GNO III.I. 24,18–19, Gregory argues that there is an essential distinction between the definition of humankind and that of God. The composition of humankind constantly changes, increasing or decreasing as human beings are added by birth, or removed by death. This stands in contrast to the Trinity: there is never any decrease so that it consists of two persons, nor any increase so that it consists of four "for no other person is begotten (γεννᾶται,

112 MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 143–144.

113 RICHARD P.C. HANSON, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God. The Arian Controversy 318–381*, Edinburgh 1988, 753 n. 78, lists other places in Epiphanius.

sc. like the Son) or proceeds (ἐκπορεύεται, sc. like the Spirit) from the Father (ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς) or from one of the persons". In the continuation of *Graec* GNO III.I. 25,4–6, Gregory speaks about the difference between humankind and God. For humankind, the persons who are the origins of other people are constantly different; for the Tri-une Godhead

there is one and the same person, that of the Father, from whom the Son is begotten (ὁ υἱὸς γεννᾶται) and the Holy Spirit proceeds (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐκπορεύεται).¹¹⁴

After ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12), Gregory adds ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12–13). This addition clarifies the relationship between the Son and the Spirit; the indissoluble bond between both is underlined, while the Father is recognised as the only uncaused cause. By adding this phrase, Gregory not only echoes the statement made in *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,25–90,1 (ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστι καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστι, καθὼς γέγραπται), but also quotes Jn 16:14–15:

ἐκεῖνος ἐμὲ δοξάσει, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λήμψεται καὶ ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν. πάντα ὅσα ἔχει ὁ πατὴρ ἐμὰ ἐστίν· διὰ τοῦτο εἶπον ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λαμβάνει καὶ ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν.

It is clear on the basis of this Scriptural passage what Gregory's purpose is. The Spirit is able to glorify the Son (δοξάσει, Jn 16:14). The continuation of *Maced* shows why: because the Spirit is δοξά personified. Even on these grounds alone, human beings cannot add anything to the honour of the Spirit. In his turn, the Spirit receives everything that belongs to the Son, and therefore to the Father. It is precisely for this reason that the addition ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12–13) is relevant, because just before this, Gregory has called the Spirit "without need of any gift from others" (ἀπροσδεὲς τῆς ἐτέρωθεν χάριτος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,9–10). The procession from the Father and the reception by the Spirit ensure that the Spirit is "without need of any gift from others", that is: from outside the Trinity. The addition ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12–13), it is true, is a statement about the *processio* of the Spirit about which this passage also says ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12), but it shows that, given the *processio* from the Father as the only prin-

¹¹⁴ *Graec* GNO III.I. 25,4–6: Ἐν γὰρ πρόσωπον καὶ τὸ αὐτό, τοῦ πατρὸς, ἐξ οὗπερ ὁ υἱὸς γεννᾶται καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐκπορεύεται (transl. by BRIAN DUVICK).

ciple, the Son does not stand in any causal relationship with regard to the Spirit, but has a mediating role in transmitting that which comes from the Father to the Spirit as the third in the order of the Trinity. Gregory had already alluded to the mediatory and transmissive role of the Son previously in *Maced*, in the passage on the three lamps:

Take the case of a flame divided among three lamps. Let us posit that the first flame is the cause of the third light in that it kindles the last light by transmitting the flame through the intermediary light.

Maced GNO III.I. 93, 3–6

Miguel Brugarolas, following André de Halleux, has rightly objected to Salvatore Taranto's suggestion that the Son is co-causal in the *processio* of the Spirit.¹¹⁵ While the Son *and* the Spirit have in common that the Father is their only cause, the Son and the Spirit each have a *proprium* that distinguishes one from the other. The *proprium* of the Spirit is to receive the life that comes from the Father through the Son, while the *proprium* of the Son is the mirror image of this: to transmit the life that comes from the Father to the Spirit.¹¹⁶ The special feature of both *propria* is that simultaneously the essential unity of the Son and the Spirit is determined through them. Further clarification can be found in the continuation of *Maced*, GNO III.I. 108,28–109,3; it is clear there how intimate the union between the Trinity *ad intra* and the Trinity *ad extra* is:

It always searches the depths of God, always receives from the Son (ἀεὶ ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβάνει); it is sent forth and not separated; it is glorified and has glory. For what gives glory to another is clearly in possession of an abundance of glory. After all, how will that which lacks glory give glory? If something is not light, how will it display light's grace? In the same way,

115 MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS, La Procesión del Espíritu Santo en Gregorio de Nisa, in: *Scripta Theologica* 44 (2012) 45–70, p. 63: “A. de Halleux ha aportado una síntesis mucho más valiosa ...” ANDRÉ DE HALLEUX, «Manifesté par le Fils». Aux origines d'une formule pneumatologique, in: A. DE HALLEUX, *Patrologie et œcuménisme. Recueil d'études*, Leuven, 1990, 338–366, p. 362: “Ainsi donc, la propriété hypostatique, qui constitue l'Esprit dans sa subsistence personnelle, est-elle exprimée en termes de causalité dans son rapport au Père, et en termes de coéternité dans son rapport au Fils.” SALVATORE TARANTO, *Gregorio di Nissa: un contributo all' storia dell' interpretazione*, Brescia 2009, 303.

116 MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS, La Procesión del Espíritu Santo, 65: “Si lo propio del Espíritu es «recibir» por medio del Hijo, puede decirse a la inversa que lo propio del Hijo es «dar» al Espíritu Santo la vida que viene del Padre. De este modo, puede afirmarse que para Gregorio el Hijo no es passivo en la procesión del Espíritu Santo.”

that which is not in itself glory, honor, greatness, and majesty will not display the power of glorifying.

Gregory's work *Abl*, probably written later than *Maced*, between 386 and 394,¹¹⁷ can also shed further light on the Trinity *ad intra*: the Father is the cause (αἷτιον, *Abl* GNO III.I. 56,3) and the Son and the Spirit are caused (ἐκ τοῦ αἷτιου, *Abl* GNO III.I. 56,4). The Son comes directly from the Father (προσεχῶς ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου, *Abl* GNO III.I. 56,5), while the Spirit receives the mediation of the Son (διὰ τοῦ προσεχῶς ἐκ τοῦ πρώτου, *Abl* GNO III.I. 56,5–6). On the one hand, this ensures that the Son's only-begottenness is preserved, whereas on the other, the mediation of the Son does not impede the natural union between the Spirit and the Father. In this way, the Son and the Spirit cannot be regarded as twin brothers, nor can the Spirit be seen as the grandson of the Father, an accusation that the Pneumatomachi had made.¹¹⁸

The continuation in *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,14–26 offers a good summary of Gregory's position with regard to the divine nature of the Spirit:

We believe and confess that the Holy Spirit must be grasped together with Father and Son in every deed and every concept, whether in the world, beyond the world, in time, or before the age, since it does not fall short of them in will, activity, or in any other of the things which are piously thought of in association with goodness. For this reason, apart from the difference in order and in subsistence (κατὰ τάξιν καὶ ὑπόστασιν), we comprehend no variation [among them] in any respect. Instead, while we maintain that it is numbered third in the sequence after

117 GIULIO MASPERO, *Trinity and Man. Gregory of Nyssa's Ad Ablabium* (vcs 86), Leiden 2007, XIX–XXII: late 380s.

118 BERNARD POTTIER, *Dieu et le Christ*, 362, has pointed out the special character of διὰ + genitive (as opposed to διὰ + accusative, which indicates a cause). The combination of διὰ + genitive instead indicates: "intermédiaires agissants, messagers plénipotentiaires": the Son as *diakonos* for the Spirit. ANTHONY EDWARD SIECIENSKI, *The Filioque. History of a Doctrinal Controversy*, Oxford 2010, 44–45, has rightly concluded: "It is thus doubtful that Gregory of Nyssa would have accepted the *filioque* as it was later understood in the West, although he witnesses to the important truth (often ignored in the East) that there is an eternal, and not simply economic, relationship of the Spirit to the Son." LUCAS FRANCISCO MATEO-SECO, *The Paternity of the Father and the Procession of the Holy Spirit. Some Historical Remarks on the Ecumenical Problem*, in: GIULIO MASPERO & ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK (ed.), *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology. Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, New York 2012, 69–102, p. 102: "The question of the *Filioque* was not within the scope of the Council Fathers' (sc. Council of Constantinople 381) pre-occupations."

Father and Son (τῇ ἀκολουθείᾳ), and third in the order (τῇ τάξει) of the tradition, we confess its inseparable connection in all other respects: in nature, honor, deity, glory, majesty, omnipotence, and in the pious confession.

In the discussion of this passage I will return to the importance of the sequence and order within the Trinity.

5 Gregory's Second Response: The Spirit Shares in the Divine Power of Creation

5.1 *The Spirit Possesses Equal Honour with the Father and the Son, Because, United with the Father and the Son, He Shares Fully in the Divine Work of Creation (GNO III.1. 97,21–98,17)*

5.1.1 Greek Text

(97,21) Τί οὖν βούλεται ἡ ὑποστολή τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ ἡ μεγαλοψυχία <τῶν> ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ πατρὸς φιλοτιμουμένων, καὶ τῷ υἱῷ τυχεῖν τὰ ἴσα χαριζομένων, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ πνεύματος σμικρολογούντων τὴν χάριν, εἴπερ δέδεικται οὐκ ἐκ τῆς (97,25) προαιρέσεως ἡμῶν πληρουμένη ἡ ἰδίως προσοῦσα τῇ θείᾳ φύσει τιμῇ, ἀλλὰ προσφυῶς συνυπάρχουσα; ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀγνωμοσύνη τῶν ἀχαρίστων διὰ τῆς τοιαύτης αὐτῶν γνώμης ἐλέγχεται· τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα τῇ ἑαυτοῦ φύσει τίμιον, ἔνδοξον, δυνατόν, πάντα τὰ ὑψηλὰ τῶν νοημάτων ἐστί, καὶ οὗτοι μὴ (97,30) βούλωνται. ναὶ φησιν. ἀλλὰ τὸν πατέρα μὲν δημιουργὸν εἶναι παρὰ τῆς γραφῆς ἐδιδάχθημεν· ὡσαύτως καὶ διὰ τοῦ (98,1) υἱοῦ τὰ πάντα γεγεννησθαι ἐμάθομεν· οὐδὲν δὲ τοιοῦτον περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἡμᾶς ὁ λόγος ἐδίδαξεν. καὶ πῶς ἐστὶν εἰκὸς εἰς ἰσοτιμίαν ἄγειν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τῷ διὰ τῆς δημιουργίας τοσοῦτον μέγεθος <τῆς> δυνάμεως ἐπιδειξαμένῳ; τί οὖν ἡμεῖς (98,5) πρὸς τοῦτο ἀποκρινοῦμεθα; ὅτι μάταια ἐλάλησαν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν οἱ νομίζοντες μὴ αἰετὰ τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα εἶναι, ἀλλὰ κατὰ καιροῦς τινὰς ποτὲ μὲν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ θεωρεῖσθαι, ποτὲ δὲ συνημμένως καταλαμβάνεσθαι. εἰ γὰρ χωρὶς τοῦ πνεύματος γέγονεν ὁ οὐρανὸς καὶ ἡ γῆ καὶ πάντα (98,10) ἡ κτίσις διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ μόνου ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς, εἰπάτωσαν οἱ ταῦτα λέγοντες, τί ἐποίει τότε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ὅτε ὁ πατὴρ μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὴν κτίσιν ἐνήργει; ἄλλοις τισὶν ἔργοις προσησχολεῖτο καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τῆς κτίσεως τῶν πάντων οὐ συνεφήπτετο; καὶ τί ἔχουσι δεῖξαι ἰδιάζον ἔργον τοῦ πνεύματος (98,15) ὅτε ἡ κτίσις συνίστατο; ἡ μωρόν ἐστι καὶ ἀνόητον τὸ καὶ ἄλλην κτίσιν παρὰ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ ὑφεστῶσαν ἐπινοεῖν.

5.1.2 Translation

(97,21) These people alternate between restrictiveness and generosity, insofar as they love giving honor to the Father and grant that equal honors belong to the Son, but become stingy with the homage they give to the Spirit. Since it has been shown that the honor that belongs properly to the divine nature is *not*^{*119} made full by our free choice *, but rather exists with it naturally, what could their purpose be in doing so? Indeed, the foolishness of these ungrateful people is exposed by their judgments like this, while the Spirit in its own nature is honorable, glorious, powerful, and all the lofty concepts, even if they do not wish it so.

“Yes”, he says, “but we have been taught by the scripture that the Father is creator, and likewise also (98) we have learned that all things received their origin through the Son. But the word taught us no such thing concerning the Spirit. And how is it reasonable to bring the Holy Spirit into equal honors with the one who has displayed such great power through creating?”

Well, what do we say in response to this? That they are “speaking vanity in their hearts” (Ps LXX 11:3) when they consider that the Spirit is not always with the Father and the Son, but rather as occasions vary, sometimes it is seen on its own, whereas at others it is understood to be connected with them. Now if it was without the Spirit that heaven, earth, and the entire creation came into being from the Father through the Son alone, then they must tell us this: what was the Holy Spirit doing then, when the Father brought about the creation together with the Son? Was he busy with certain other tasks and for that reason did not join in the creation of all things? And are they able to show that the Spirit had a special task when the creation was formed? It is quite moronic and senseless to invent some other creation alongside the one that came into being from the Father through the Son.

5.1.3 Paraphrase

It is a foolish supposition to say that the Spirit does not possess equal honour with the Son because Scripture does not explicitly mention the Spirit as co-creator alongside the Father and the Son. As if the Spirit is not always inseparably connected with the Father and the Son, and as if it were imaginable that the Spirit was either busy doing other things during the creation, or brought about a creation of his own in addition to that of the Father and the Son.

119 The word οὐκ has mistakenly been omitted from the translation, and I have therefore added *not* here.

5.1.4 Sub-questions

On what grounds do Gregory's opponents reject the idea that the Spirit possesses the fullness of honour by his own nature?

Gregory's opponents reject the idea that the Spirit possesses the fullness of honour by his own nature because Scripture does not explicitly state that the Spirit shares in the power of creation and in the work of creation by the Father and the Son. Just as in earlier days the Arians (influenced by neo-Platonism) assigned to the Son an intermediate position between God the creator and the creation, so now the Pneumatomachi assign to the Spirit a place between the creators, the Father and the Son, on the one hand, and the created world on the other. The Spirit is thus neither fully God, nor simply part of creation.¹²⁰ In the continuation of *Maced*, Gregory quotes his opponents who say that the Spirit is a mixed being: "If, then, they say that the Spirit's nature is mixed with both." (εἰ οὖν μεμίχθαι τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος φύσιν πρὸς ἑκάτερα λέγουσιν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 104,19–20). Immediately before this (*Maced* GNO III.I. 104,8–12), Gregory describes the absurdity of accepting the existence of a being on the border of the created and the uncreated:

After all, reason recognizes no intermediary between them, such that it supposes between them there is some characteristic mark of a nature invented on the border of the created and the uncreated, as if partaking of both but being neither of the two completely.

What is Gregory's first response to this resistance of his opponents?

Before Gregory addresses the problem of the Spirit's power of creation, he draws his previous argument about the Spirit's fullness of honour to a preliminary conclusion. Gregory does this in the form of a ferocious personal attack: in a chiasmic sentence (ἡ ὑποστολή followed by ἡ μεγαλοψυχία versus φιλοτιμουμένων plus χαριζομένων followed by σμικρολογούντων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,21–24), he accuses his opponents of making an unfounded distinction between the Father and the Son on the one hand and the Spirit on the other by generously rendering the honour due to the Father and the Son, and then small-mindedly refusing the gift of their honour to the Spirit. A clear sign of their lack of intelligence and their ingratitude! Even though his opponents do not like it, it is part of the divine nature of the Spirit that he is honourable by nature. Gregory uses epithets that he did not use in the immediately preceding passage: the Spirit by his own nature is τίμιον, ἔνδοξον, δυνατόν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,28–29. The fact

120 Cf. MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS BRUFAU, *El Espíritu Santo*, 207–212.

that Gregory uses these epithets in the conclusion is consistent with the ultimate aim of his work: what is at stake is the Spirit's fullness of honour, which he possesses by his divine nature, independently of the honour that people give him.¹²¹ The honour of the Spirit is not made complete on the basis of our free choice, οὐκ ἐκ τῆς προαιρέσεως ἡμῶν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,24–25. In the continuation of *Maced* GNO III.I. 114,18, the human προαίρεσις plays a significant role.¹²² Human beings cannot add anything to the fullness of honour and the greatness of the Spirit. The only thing that human beings have to offer their gratitude, is their free will: “But the only gift human nature offers is its freedom of choice.” (ἡ δὲ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις μόνην δωροφορεῖ τὴν προαίρεσιν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 114,18).

The fact that Gregory concludes the triad of τίμιον, ἔνδοξον, δυνατὸν (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,28–29) with δυνατὸν provides a seamless transition to his proposition that the Spirit shares fully in the power of creation of the Father and the Son. Gregory continues in rhetorical fashion: he introduces his opponents as speakers: ναὶ φησιν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,30.¹²³ Gregory supposes that his opponents have now abandoned their first line of defence and acknowledge that the Spirit possesses the fullness of honour by nature, but are now entrenching themselves behind their second line of defence: Scripture teaches that the

121 Earlier in *Maced*, Gregory preferred to use this series for the Spirit, to which, incidentally, ἀγαθόν has been added: οὕτω τοίνυν εἰ ἀληθεύει περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ὁ θεῖον λέγων, οὐδὲ ὁ τίμιον τε καὶ ἔνδοξον ἀγαθόν τε καὶ δυνατὸν εἶναι τοῦτο διοριζόμενος ψεύδεται, *Maced* GNO III.I. 93,24–27; πρόδηλον ὅτι τοῖς εὐσημετέροις ὀνόμασι τε καὶ νοήμασι περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος οἱ εὐσεβοῦντες συνθήσονται καὶ ἐροῦσιν εἶναι ταῦτα, ἃ δὴ πολλὰκις εἰρήκαμεν, τίμιον, δυνατὸν, ἔνδοξον, ἀγαθόν καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο τῶν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν συντεινόντων λέγεται, *Maced* GNO III.I. 94,15–19. The contrasts are evidence of the great importance that Gregory assigns to these epithets. Anyone who does not attribute these epithets to the Spirit perpetrates the height of absurdity: ὁ γὰρ ἔνδοξον μὴ διδοὺς ἄδοξον δώσει καὶ ὁ τὸ δυνατὸν ἀθετῶν ἐπ’ αὐτοῦ τῷ ἐναντίῳ συνθήσεται· ὡσαύτως καὶ περὶ τοῦ τιμίου καὶ ἀγαθοῦ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 94,10–12.

122 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ (tr.), Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Holy Spirit against the Macedonian Spirit-Fighters*, in: *The Cambridge Edition of Early Christian Writings. vol. 1, God, part II Creeds and Controversies (300–400)*, Cambridge 2017, 270–293, p. 276 n. 12, has wrongly chosen to translate προαίρεσις as “devotion”. This is to do serious injustice to the importance of the human προαίρεσις as freedom of choice in the rest of *Maced*.

123 PETER MEINHOLD, *Pneumatomachoi*, 1092, believes that the following section (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,30–98,2) is a rare literal Pneumatomachian quotation, perhaps derived from a dialogue. WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen—Eine Untersuchung zur Dogmengeschichte des vierten Jahrhunderts*, Hamburg 1967, 72, says of ὥστε τολμᾶν λέγειν Μόνος ἐποίησεν ὁ πατήρ διὰ μόνου τοῦ υἱοῦ τὰ πάντα, τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τῆς δημιουργίας ἢ μὴ παρόντος ἢ μὴ ἐνεργούντος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 99,4–6: “klingt wie ein Zitat, dürfte aber eher eine Zusammenfassung Gregors sein.”

Father is the Creator, and that everything came into being through the Son, but it does not teach that the Spirit shares in the full power of creation that the Father and the Son possess. It follows from this, they believe, that the Spirit is not perfectly God, and does not possess equal honour with the Father and the Son.

It is striking that Gregory accepts his opponents' argument that Scripture contains no indications that the Spirit participated in the creation. By contrast, in *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 14,17–24 and *Ref Eun* GNO II. 354,9–13, Gregory argues that the Son and the Spirit share in the power of creation on the basis of Ps LXX 32:6:

τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ κυρίου οἱ οὐρανοὶ ἐστερεώθησαν καὶ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ πᾶσα ἡ δύναμις αὐτῶν.

Gregory uses this to demonstrate the divinity of the Son and the Spirit. *Or cat* GNO III. IV. 14,17–20 clearly states that Scripture proves the existence of the Logos of God and the Spirit of God, and the fact that both share in the power of creation.¹²⁴ In making this argument, Gregory goes a good deal further than his model Basil, who in his *De Spiritu Sancto* xvi 38, on the basis of the same Psalm verse Ps LXX 32:6, and by analogy with Origen's *De Principiis* 1.3.7, limits the participation of the Spirit in the work of creation to the sanctification and completion of the just.¹²⁵ In *De Spiritu Sancto* xvi 38,39, Basil speaks of ἡ κατὰ τὸν ἁγιασμὸν τελείωσις by the Spirit. In *Maced*, rather than immediately wield the testimony of Scripture, Gregory appeals to common sense to rein in the folly of his opponents. In line with what went before, Gregory supposes that his opponents believe that the Spirit, as a kind of intermediate figure, already existed before the creation, but did not share in the power of creation that the Father and the Son possess.¹²⁶ Keeping silent on the testimony of Scrip-

124 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 14,17–20: τὸ γὰρ εἶναι λόγον θεοῦ καὶ πνεῦμα θεοῦ οὐσιωδῶς ὑφεστῶσας δυνάμεις, ποιητικὰς τε τῶν γεγεννημένων καὶ περιεκτικὰς τῶν ὄντων, ἐκ τῶν θεοπνεύστων γραφῶν ἐναργέστερον δείκνυται.

125 ANTHONY MEREDITH, The Pneumatology of the Cappadocian Fathers, in: *Irish Theological Quarterly* 48 (1981) 196–211, p. 204, does refer to Basil's *Homiliae in Hexaemeron* II 6 (where he says on the basis of Gen 1:2 that the Spirit does not stand outside the work of creation: ὅτι οὐδὲ τῆς δημιουργικῆς ἐνεργείας τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἀπολείπεται), but explains Basil's reticence, or even defectiveness ("the defective nature of his pneumatology") in making the divinity of the Spirit explicit by pointing at Basil's "imperfect (or barely existent) awareness of the role played by the Holy Spirit in the work of the creation". In view also of *De Spiritu Sancto* XIX 49, where the Spirit is included in the creation of the celestial powers, Meredith's explanation of the concept of creation is too restrictive.

126 WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Die Pneumatomachen*, 70, believes, though not without

ture, he ridicules his opponents' idea that the Spirit, as an intermediate figure, already existed before the creation, but was excluded from the Father's and the Son's power of creation. Ultimately, Gregory does appeal to Scripture: at the end of the following section he quotes Paul's 1 Cor 12:11 to throw this verse into his opponents' faces. They who do not admit that the Spirit shares fully in the power of the creation that the Father and the Son possess make a liar of Paul, who declares πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργεῖ καθὼς βούλεται (*Maced* GNO III.I. 99,15), (and therefore of everyone who says this with Paul).

5.2 *The Father and the Son and the Spirit Are Inseparably Connected with Each Other in a Fitting Sequence* (GNO III.I. 98,18–99,15)

5.2.1 Greek Text

(98,18) Ἀλλ' οὐκ ἡσυχολεῖτο μέν, ῥαθυμία δέ τινα καὶ ῥαστώνη καὶ τῷ περὶ τοὺς πόνους ὀκνῶ τῆς περὶ τὴν κτίσιν σπουδῆς (98,20) ἐχωρίζετο. ἀλλ' ἔλεως εἴη ἡμῖν ἐπὶ τῇ ματαιότητι ταύτῃ τῇ τῶν λόγων αὐτῇ ἢ τοῦ πνεύματος χάρις. τῇ γὰρ ἀτοπία τῶν τὰ τοιαῦτα δογματιζόντων κατ' ἔχνος ἐπόμενοι ἀβουλήτως ταῖς ἐννοίαις αὐτῶν οἷόν τινα βορβόρῳ τὸν λόγον κατερρυπώσαμεν. ἡ γὰρ εὐσεβὴς διάνοια τοῦτον ἔχει τὸν τρόπον· οὔτε πατὴρ (98,25) χωρὶς υἱοῦ ποτε ἐννοεῖται οὔτε υἱὸς δίχα τοῦ ἁγίου¹²⁷ πνεύματος καταλαμβάνεται. ὥς γὰρ ἀμήχανόν ἐστιν ἀνελθεῖν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα μὴ διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ ὑψωθέντα, οὕτως ἀδύνατόν ἐστι κύριον Ἰησοῦν εἰπεῖν μὴ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ· οὐκοῦν ἀκολούθως τε καὶ συνημμένως ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ (98,30) ἅγιον αἰ μετ' ἀλλήλων ἐν τελείᾳ τῇ τριάδι γνωρίζονται καὶ πρὸ πάσης κτίσεως καὶ πρὸ πάντων αἰώνων καὶ πρὸ πάσης καταληπτῆς ἐπινοίας αἰ πατὴρ ὁ πατὴρ ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν τῷ (99,1) πατρὶ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. εἰ οὖν ἀχωρίστως ταῦτα μετ' ἀλλήλων ἐστίν, τίς ἡ ματαιότης τῶν ἐν καιρῷ τινα διαχωρίζειν ἐπιχειρούντων τὸ ἄτμητον καὶ διαιρεῖν τὸ ἀχώριστον, ὥστε τολμᾶν λέγειν· Μόνος ἐποίησεν (99,5) ὁ πατὴρ διὰ μόνου τοῦ υἱοῦ τὰ πάντα, τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τῆς δημιουργίας ἢ μὴ παρόντος ἢ μὴ¹²⁸ ἐνεργοῦντος, εἰ μὲν γὰρ οὐ παρῆν, εἰπάτωσαν πολὺ ἦν, πάντα τοῦ θεοῦ διειληφότος, εἴ τινα ἰδιάζουσιν τῷ πνεύματι στάσιν ἐπινοοῦσιν, ὥστε ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ κεχωρισμένως εἶναι κατὰ τὸν τῆς (99,10) κτίσεως χρόνον· εἰ δὲ παρῆν, πῶς ἀνενέργητον ἦν; τῷ μὴ δύνασθαι τι ποιεῖν ἢ τῷ μὴ βούλεσθαι; ἐκουσίως ἀπολειπόμενον ἢ ὑπὸ τινος βιαιοτέρας ἀνάγκης ἐλαυνόμενον; εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἐκ προαιρέσεως τὴν ἀργίαν ἡσπᾶ-

reservation, that the Pneumatomachi viewed the Spirit as a subservient being, an 'implementing body'.

127 There appears to be a typographical error in the Greek text of *Maced* GNO III.I. 98,25 in GNO: ἅγιον should be: ἁγίου.

128 There appears to be a typographical error in the Greek text of *Maced* GNO III.I. 99,6 in GNO: ἢ μὴ should be ἢ μὴ.

ζετο, οὐδὲ ἐν ἄλλῳ τινὶ πάντως τὸ ἐνεργεῖν καταδέχεται, καὶ ψευδῆς κατ' αὐτοὺς ὁ (99,15) λέγων, ὅτι πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργεῖ καθὼς βούλεται.

5.2.2 Translation

(98,18) Alternatively, perhaps it was not at all occupied, but with a certain lazy nonchalance and shirking its labor, it avoided the effort of creating. May the very grace of the Spirit have mercy on us for these empty words! For by recounting step-by-step the absurdity of those who teach such things we have unwillingly sullied our speech in the muck and the mire of their ideas.

Now pious thinking has this character: the Father can never be conceived without the Son, nor can the Son be understood without the Holy¹²⁹ Spirit. For just as it is impossible to rise up to the Father unless one is lifted up through the Son, so too one “cannot say Lord Jesus except in the Holy Spirit.” (1 Cor 12:3) Therefore, in an ordered sequence and connected together, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are always recognized with one another in a perfect Trinity. Before the entire creation, before all the ages, and before every conceivable idea, always the Father is Father, the Son is (99) in the Father, and the Holy Spirit is with the Son. So then, since they exist inseparably with one another, look at how vain these people are when they try at one particular occasion to sever what is indivisible and to divide what is inseparable, such that they are bold enough to say, “Only the Father made all things through the Son alone, while on the occasion of creating the Holy Spirit either was not present or was inactive.”

Now, if it was not present, let them tell us where it was, since it was completely cut off from God, and whether they can discover some special place for the Spirit, such that it could be on its own and separate at the time of creation. But if it was present, how was it inactive? Was this because it was unable or unwilling to do something? Did it fail to act willingly or was it driven by some forceful constraint? For if it embraced idleness out of its own decision, it certainly would not at some other point accept activity, and they would make a liar of the one who said that it “produces all things in all as it wishes.” (1 Cor 12:6, 11)

5.2.3 Paraphrase

It is folly to place the Spirit outside the power of creation that the Father and the Son possess, because this is to divide the inseparable unity of the three persons of the Trinity, which is at odds with all pious ideas. Before the creation, before

129 ARG: Reading ἁγίου instead of ἄγιον.

all ages, before our ability to comprehend, the three divine persons are together, and they are known as such in fitting sequence and in union with each other.

5.2.4 Sub-questions

How does Gregory continue to ridicule the foolish insight about the Spirit as excluded from the power of creation that the Father and the Son possess?

His opponents' folly is evident when they place the Spirit outside the power of creation that the Father and the Son possess, so that they must assume that the Spirit was somewhere other than where the Father and the Son were during the creation, or, out of idleness and through his own free will, absented himself from the work of creation, or was constrained from participating in this work by some power higher than the Spirit.

Gregory speaks of the folly of their words (τῇ ματαιότητι ταύτῃ τῇ τῶν λόγων, *Maced GNO III.I. 98,20–21*) and the absurdity of those who invent such doctrines (τῇ γὰρ ἀτοπίᾳ τῶν τὰ τοιαῦτα δογματιζόντων, *Maced GNO III.I. 98,21–22*). Previously, Gregory had already contrasted the folly and absurdity of his opponents with pious thinking and with godliness. In *Maced GNO III.I. 94,14–16*, the pious are contrasted with those who do not acknowledge the Spirit as possessing the fullness of honour and as powerful by nature, thus contending the opposite:

But if this loathsome consequence goes beyond all absurdity and blasphemy, then it is clear that those who are pious will give their assent to the more distinct names and concepts for the Holy Spirit.

In *Maced GNO III.I. 95,14–15*, Gregory also uses the word *δογματίζειν* in *malam partem*:

When these people forbid 'equal honor', they are actually proclaiming the doctrine (δογματίζουσι) of 'less honor'.

Immediately beforehand, Gregory calls those who invent innovative teachings οἱ καινοὶ δογματισταί (*Maced GNO III.I. 95,7–8*):

then why do these new dogmatists dictate that we must not confess for the Spirit equal honor with Father and Son?

Similarly, in *Maced GNO III.I. 96,18–19*, Gregory associates the ridiculousness of his opponents with their impiety: "Or is it at once ridiculous and impious to think such things?" Gregory does not limit himself to ridiculing his opponents,

but even calls his opponents' ideas muck (οἶόν τιτι βορβόρω, *Maced* GNO III.I. 98,23) which sullies the path along which Gregory's ideas would progress were he to adopt the absurdity of those who invent impious doctrines about the Spirit.

What conclusion e contrario does Gregory draw in respect of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit possesses a free will of his own, his own freedom of choice, προαίρεσις, like the Father and the Son. This is so because it is clear *e contrario* from the passage

For if it embraced idleness *out of its own decision* (ἐκ προαίρεσεως), it certainly would not at some other point accept activity, and they would make a liar of the one who said that it 'produces all things in all as it wishes'.

Maced GNO III.I. 99,12–15

that the participation of the Spirit in the work of creation took place on the basis of his προαίρεσις.¹³⁰ In God there is no necessity but only freedom. In *Or cat* Gregory says the following about the Spirit:

but like God's Word it has its own subsistence, is capable of willing (προαιρετικήν), and is self-moved and active. It ever chooses the good; and to fulfill its every purpose it has the power that answers to its will.¹³¹

Like the Father and the Son, the Spirit has freedom of choice, both within the Trinity and in relation to the creation.¹³² Within the Trinity, the divine will of the Father and its objects, those willed, that is the Son and the Spirit, are inseparably united.¹³³ And the divine will is the matter and the essence of the

¹³⁰ GIAMPIETRO DAL TOSO, *La Nozione di Proairesis in Gregorio di Nissa. Analisi Semiotico-linguistica e Prospettive Antropologiche*, Frankfurt am Main 1998, 172.

¹³¹ *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 13,9–12: ἀλλὰ καθ' ὁμοιότητα τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου καθ' ὑπόστασιν οὖσαν, προαιρετικήν, αὐτοκίνητον, ἐνεργόν, πάντοτε τὸ ἀγαθὸν αἰρουμένην καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν πρόθεσιν σύνδρομον ἔχουσαν τῇ βουλήσει τὴν δύναμιν (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

¹³² GIAMPIETRO DAL TOSO, *La Nozione*, 146–176.

¹³³ See for instance *Eun* III GNO II. 192,1–18. TORSTEIN THEODOR TOLLEFSEN, *Activity and Participation in Late Antique and Early Christian Thought*, Oxford 2012, in chapter 3.a. *The Internal Activity of the Godhead—St. Gregory of Nyssa on Trinitarian Generation* (pp. 47–66), says on p. 62: "Maybe we could even say that the natural will of the Father is triadic; willing to have a Son and a Spirit is willing to be the Father of the Son and the Emitter of the Spirit. In this way, the triadic pattern of divine life emerges. But, we should note that this last speculation moves beyond what Gregory says in so many words."

created things: τὸ θεῖον θέλημα ὕλη καὶ οὐσία τῶν δημιουργημάτων (*Tunc et ipse* GNO III.II. 11, 6–7). The fact that the will of the Father and the will of the Son are identical, Gregory argues in *Eun* 1, means that the Father and the Son have a shared nature:

the identity of purposes surely indicates the shared nature of those who have identical purposes.¹³⁴

The importance of this divine freedom of choice is strongly to the fore in the conclusion of *Maced*, which speaks of human beings in their *reditus* to God having only their own προαίρεσις—the greatest gift that God has given human beings, to be the image of God—as a gift to praise and thank God:

But the only gift human nature offers is its freedom of choice, rendering the homage that it intends to give only by willing it. It has no capacity beyond its will and its intentional impulse and movement.

Maced GNO III.I. 114,18–21

What content does Gregory give to pious thinking in response to the folly of his opponents?

By contrast with the folly of his opponents, which is proof of their impiety, especially towards the Spirit, Gregory with a certain irony here invokes the gift of the Spirit (ἡ τοῦ πνεύματος χάρις, *Maced* GNO III.I. 98,21), asking the Spirit to be gracious to him and his allies in his rebuttal. Thanks to the Spirit's work of grace, Gregory is able to give content to the pious thinking that he presents as the opposite of his opponents' folly. Concisely and clearly, he describes the indivisible unity of the Trinity, as well as the fitting sequence of Father, Son, and Spirit. The key words of his argument are “in ordered sequence and in union with each other” (ἀκολούθως τε καὶ συνημμένως, *Maced* GNO III.I. 98,28–29). The inseparable union of Father, Son, and Spirit is announced with συνημμένως (*Maced* GNO III.I. 98,29), is then explained as a union that is before all creation and before all time, and that transcends all comprehension, and is concluded with an unequivocal “without separation” (ἀχωρίστως, *Maced* GNO III.I. 99,2) in “If they are then together without separation” (εἰ οὖν ἀχωρίστως ταῦτα μετ' ἀλλήλων ἐστίν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 99,1–2). By using the description συνημμένως (*Maced* GNO III.I. 98,29), which is confirmed and strengthened in ἀχωρίστως

134 *Eun* I GNO I. 154,19–20: ἡ τῶν προαιρέσεων ταυτότης τὸ κοινὸν τῆς φύσεως τῶν τὰ αὐτὰ προαιρουμένων πάντως ἐνδείκνυται (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

(*Maced* GNO III.I. 99,2), Gregory refers back to his first response to the Pneumatomachi at the beginning of *Maced*:

while in all other respects we confess, as I said, that it (sc. the Spirit) remains connected and indistinguishable (τὸ συνημμένον καὶ ἀπαράλλακτον).

Maced GNO III.I. 90,4–5

It is not enough to establish the connection between the Spirit and the Father and the Son, because his opponents obviously believe it is possible that the Spirit (*Maced* GNO III.I. 98,6–8)

is not always with the Father and the Son, but rather as occasions vary, sometimes it is seen on its own, whereas at others it is understood to be connected with them (ποτέ δὲ συνημμένως).

Therefore, before he arrives at the conclusion of ‘without separation’, Gregory repeatedly adds “always” to the mutual connection (strengthened in *Maced* GNO III.I. 98,30 by “in perfect threeness”: ὁ πατήρ καὶ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον αἰὲν μετ’ ἀλλήλων ἐν τελείᾳ τῇ τριάδι γνωρίζονται; *Maced* GNO III.I. 98,30–99,1: αἰὲν πατήρ ὁ πατήρ ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν τῷ πατρὶ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον). Immediately before the term συνημμένως (*Maced* GNO III.I. 98,29) Gregory uses the important term ἀκολουθῶς (*Maced* GNO III.I. 98,28), “in an ordered sequence”.¹³⁵ It is preceded by the explanation of this term in this context (*Maced* GNO III.I. 98,26–28):

For just as it is impossible to rise up to the Father unless one is lifted up through the Son, so too one ‘cannot say Lord Jesus except in the Holy Spirit.’

The ἀκολουθία here refers to the ascent to the Father which takes place starting from the Spirit in whom a person calls Jesus Lord. Human beings are raised up

¹³⁵ I have chosen to interpret this as meaning *in fitting, ordered sequence*; this interpretation does justice to the convergence of order and sequence within the Trinity, as Gregory argues. The translation of ἀκολουθῶς as *folgerichtig*, as in VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarianism, Proceedings of the 11th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Tübingen, 17–20 September 2008* (VCS 106), Leiden 2011, 54, fails to reflect the importance of the use of ἀκολουθία for the Trinity. The inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία becomes visible in the soteriological ἀκολουθία.

to the Father through the mediation of Jesus the Lord as Son. There is the *exitus*, the Son who comes to humankind from the Father and bestows the Spirit upon it, and there is the *reditus*: in the Spirit, human beings come to the Son, who brings them to the Father. We see here how the inner-Trinitarian life, human understanding of this, and the entry of human beings into the divine life of the Trinity are all connected. The Spirit given by Jesus sets in motion the *reditus* of the human being through the Son to the Father, a movement of ascent (ἀνελεῖν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 98,26). This is an amplification of the importance of the ἀκολουθία: the sequence of Father, Son, and Spirit has a soteriological significance. Earlier, in *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,31–34, Gregory argues that the sequence as it is given in the baptismal command in Scripture (Mt 28:19), does not detract in any way from the full divinity of the Spirit:

Nor will it suffice for their defense to say that since the Lord handed down to the disciples that the Spirit is third in order (cf. Mt 28:19), he is *ipso facto* estranged from the appropriate notion of God.

In the continuation of *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,19–26, ἀκολουθία returns as a relevant notion for the distinction between the three divine persons. In addition to the person, it is the ἀκολουθία that distinguishes the three divine persons:¹³⁶

For this reason, apart from the difference in order and in subsistence, we comprehend no variation [among them] in any respect. Instead, while we maintain that it is numbered third in the sequence (τῇ ἀκολουθίᾳ) after Father and Son, and third in the order of the tradition, we confess its inseparable connection in all other respects: in nature, honor, deity, glory, majesty, omnipotence, and in the pious confession.

¹³⁶ In his chapter *Enchaînement* of his book *L'être et le temps chez Grégoire de Nysse*, Leiden 1970, Jean Daniélou on p. 37 n. 1 explains why he omitted any consideration of Gregory's use of ἀκολουθία in Trinitarian theology. Gregory mainly uses the philosophical meaning of ἀκολουθία because he is intent on discovering an order in the facts that presupposes a certain hierarchy. Gregory explicitly distinguishes this order from the ἀκολουθία within Trinitarian theology, as he uses it for instance in his rebuttal of Eunomius in *Eun* I GNO I. 84,10–86,16. There is no connotation of hierarchy in the latter sense of ἀκολουθία. Gregory opposes Eunomius, who deduced from the sequence as it occurs for instance in Mt 28:19 a distinction in nature between the persons of Father, Son, and Spirit.

5.3 *The Creation Comes to Completion from the Father, through the Mediation of the Son, in the Holy Spirit (GNO III.I. 99,16–100,11)*

5.3.1 Greek Text

(99,16) Εἰ δὲ τοῦτω μὲν ἐστὶν ἡ πρὸς τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὁρμή, ὑπερκειμένη δέ τις ἐξουσία κωλύει τὴν πρόθεσιν, εἰπάτωσαν τὴν αἰτίαν τοῦ ταῦτα κωλύοντος. φθόνῳ τῆς ἐκ τῶν ἔργων δόξης, ὡς ἂν μὴ καὶ εἰς ἄλλον διαβαίῃ τῶν κατορθωμάτων (99,20) τὸ θαῦμα ἢ τῷ μὴ καταπιστεῦναι τῇ συνεργίᾳ, ὡς ἐπὶ λύμῃ τοῦ παντὸς ἐσομένης αὐτοῦ τῆς ἐργασίας; πάντως γὰρ τῶν τοιούτων ὑπολήψεων καὶ τὰς αἰτίας ἡμῖν οἱ σοφοὶ οὗτοι διασαφῆσουσιν. εἰ δὲ οὔτε φθόνος τῆς θείας ἄπτεται φύσεως οὔτε τι σφάλμα περὶ τὴν ἄπταιστον φύσιν ἐπινοεῖται, (99,25) τί βούλεται αὐτοῖς ἡ μικροπρέπεια τῶν νοημάτων ἢ τῆς δημιουργικῆς αἰτίας ἀφορίζουσα τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος δύναμιν, δέον ταῖς ὑψηλοτέραις τῶν ἐννοιῶν ἀφίεναι μὲν τὰ ταπεινά καὶ ἀνθρώπινα τῶν νοημάτων, λογισμὸν δὲ λαβεῖν τοῦ ὕψους τῶν ζητούμενων ἐπάξιον· ὅτι οὔτε (99,30) ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς συνεργίας τινὸς χρήζων διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὰ πάντα ἐποίησεν οὔτε ὁ μονογενὴς θεὸς ἐλάττωνα τῆς προθέσεως τὴν δύναμιν ἔχων ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι τὰ πάντα (100,1) ἐργάζεται. ἀλλὰ πηγὴ μὲν δυνάμεως ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ, δυνάμεις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· ἡ δὲ κτίσις πᾶσα ὅση τε αἰσθητὴ καὶ ὅση ἀσώματος τῆς θείας δυνάμεως ἐστὶν ἀποτέλεσμα. καὶ ἐπειδὴ πόνος (100,5) οὐδεὶς ἐν τῇ συστάσει τῶν περὶ τὴν θείαν φύσιν ὑπονοεῖται (ὁμοῦ γὰρ τῷ προελεσθαι τὸ γενέσθαι δέον εὐθύς οὐσία ἢ πρόθεσις γίνεται), πᾶσαν τὴν διὰ τῆς κτίσεως ὑποστάσαν φύσιν, θελήματος κίνησιν καὶ προθέσεως ὁρμὴν καὶ δυνάμεως διάδοσιν, εἰκότως ἂν τις προσαγορεύσειεν ἐκ πατρὸς ἀρχο-(100,10)μένην καὶ δι' υἱοῦ προϊούσαν καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ τελειούμενην.

5.3.2 Translation

(99,16) If, however, the impulse to act does belong to it, but a higher power prevented this intention from being fulfilled, let them tell us the reason why this power prevented these things. Was it jealous of the glory that might come [to the Spirit] from its works, wanting to prevent the awe felt at its successes from passing over to another? Or did it not trust the Spirit to help, thinking that the Spirit's work would bring the universe to corruption? I'm sure these sages will clarify for us the reasons behind such notions. Since jealousy cannot touch the divine nature, nor is any failure conceivable for the inerrant nature, why are they so enamored of base concepts that they separate the power of the Spirit from the creative cause?

One must put away lowly, human concepts for more lofty notions, and take up a way of thinking worthy of the sublimity of what one is seeking. It is not because he needed any help that the God who is over all made all things through the Son; nor is it because the Only-Begotten God's power is inferior

to his purpose that he wrought all things in the Holy Spirit. (100) Rather, the Father is the fount of power, the Son is the Father's power (cf. 1 Cor 1:24), and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of power (cf. Wisd 7:25; 1 Tim 1:7), whereas the entire creation, as much of it as is sense-perceptible and as much of it as is incorporeal, is the product of the divine power. And we cannot suppose that there is any strain whatsoever when things pertaining to the divine nature come together—for as soon as it decides what must occur, the intention immediately becomes reality. Accordingly, someone might justly call the entire nature that came into being through creation a movement of will, an impulse of intention, and a transmission of power, which begins from the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Holy Spirit.

5.3.3 Paraphrase

In contrast to the base, all-too-human idea that the Spirit is separated from the cause of creation stands the pious insight that all of creation begins from the will of the Father as the source of the power, proceeds through the mediation of the Son as the power, and is completed in the Holy Spirit as the spirit of the power.

5.3.4 Sub-questions

How does Gregory conclude his ridiculing of the foolish idea that the Spirit is excluded from the power of creation that the Father and the Son possess?

Gregory follows his opponents' argument a little further. If he is to accept on the basis of Scripture (1 Cor 12:5) that his opponents believe that the impulse for activity (ἡ πρὸς τὸ ἐνεργεῖν ὁρμή, *Maced* GNO III.1. 99,16) is present in the Spirit, he demonstrates the absurdity of his opponents' view that the Spirit is outside the power of creation of the Father and the Son, by challenging them to say what reasons there could be to have prevented the Spirit from sharing in this power of creation. Gregory himself provides an answer by mentioning a number of possible reasons, and thus reduces his opponents' argument *ad absurdum*: jealousy of the Spirit on the part of the Father and the Son, lack of trust on the part of the Father and the Son in cooperation with the Spirit.¹³⁷

¹³⁷ Plato, in his *Timaeus* 29 e, already mentioned the absence of jealousy in the composer of all things: Ἀγαθὸς ἦν, ἀγαθῷ δὲ οὐδεὶς περὶ οὐδενὸς οὐδέποτε ἐγγίγγνεται φθόνος. Gregory quotes Plato here without referencing his source. JAROSLAV PELIKAN, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 20, sees this practice of quoting "almost offhand" as a confirmation of the great importance of the *Timaeus* for people such as Gregory. HAROLD FREDRIK CHERNISS, *The Platonism of Gregory of Nyssa*, New York 1930 (repr. 1971), 34, says in respect of this passage in the *Timaeus* and its quotation by Gregory: "This 'proof' of God's goodness

Gregory concludes his ridiculing of his opponents by sarcastically calling them “these sages” (οἱ σοφοὶ οὗτοι, *Maced GNO III.I. 99,22*) and by challenging them to state their reasons for assuming jealousy and mistrust of the Spirit on the part of the Father and the Son. With their mean-spiritedness, Gregory contrasts the lofty concepts that actually befit God: τὸ ἐν παντὶ θεοπρεπεῖ νοήματι τέλειον (*Maced GNO III.I. 91,5–6*). Gregory concludes his accusation by declaring their ideas to be base human ideas, which must be met by a way of thinking that is fitting to the exalted nature of that which Gregory is investigating.¹³⁸

What pious insight about the Spirit in relation to creation does Gregory postulate as fundamental vis-à-vis the foolish ideas of his opponents?

Gregory replies to his opponents’ base, all-too-human insight about the Spirit who supposedly stands outside the power of creation of the Father and the Son by choosing a way of thinking that is fitting to the exalted nature of his inquiry, a way of thinking rooted in piety and marked not by absurdity but by good sense. His basic axiom when it comes to the creative power of the Spirit is that all of creation begins in the will of the Father as the source of the power, proceeds through the mediation of the Son as the power, and is completed in the Holy Spirit as the spirit of the power.¹³⁹ This basic axiom implies that the

deeply affected Gregory, for in it as in much else of Plato he found a means of associating his religion and this great philosopher, for the study of whom, though a pagan, he would find some excuse.”

- 138 MARIETTE CANÉVET, *Grégoire de Nysse*, 61, has observed concerning this passage that Gregory is conscious of the fact that all words, symbols, and meanings lose their obvious meaning that is adapted to the created realities when they are applied to the uncreated God, and that they lead to a quest for what is fitting for Gregory’s concept of God, i.e. of his divine infinity.
- 139 PAUL ZEMP, *Die Grundlagen heilsgeschichtlichen Denkens bei Gregor von Nyssa*, (Münchener Theologische Studien 38), München 1970, speaks in his sub-chapter *Die Immanenz Gottes in der Schöpfung* (pp. 52–59) of “Die Beziehung des Pneuma zur sichtbaren Welt” (p. 57) on the basis of *Maced*. LEWIS AYRES, *Innovation and Ressourcement in Pro-Nicene Pneumatology*, in: *Augustinian Studies* 39 (2008) 187–205, p. 197, has rightly contended: “A recovery of the Spirit’s role in creation thus enables a new appreciation of the Spirit’s role in sanctification. The appropriation of the doctrine of the undiminished giver helps to push those who link the Spirit’s role in creation and sanctification toward developing accounts of the unmediated presence of Father, Son and Spirit in the creation and toward accounts of the Christian life as a participation in the divine life.” TINA DOLIDZE, *Der KINHΣIΣ—Begriff der Griechischen Philosophie bei Gregor von Nyssa*, in: HUBERTUS R. DROBNER & ALBERT VICIANO (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 1998* (VCS 52), Leiden 2000, 421–445, pp. 433–434, has observed concerning the created things that have come into being by “die Willens-

ἀκολουθία of the Trinity is significant to the creation, which is brought to completion, from the Father as the source, through the mediation of the Son, in the Spirit. The soteriological ἀκολουθία (the *exitus* of the Son who comes from the Father to humankind and bestows the Spirit upon it makes a *reditus* possible for human beings who come in the Spirit to the Son, who brings them to the Father) is preceded by the ἀκολουθία that the divine power follows in the creation and in its completion in the Spirit. This ἀκολουθία, too, has its origin in the inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία. We have thus identified three ἀκολουθίαι, the inner-Trinitarian one, which manifests itself in the ἀκολουθία of creation and in the ἀκολουθία of redemption and the return of humankind to God. The redemption of humankind that returns to God is an expansion of the creation by God. Does Gregory regard the work of creation and the divine work of redemption as one and the same thing?¹⁴⁰ This triad is of fundamental importance to the structure of his work *Maced*; see the introductory chapter 1, section 11.

In his second response—the Spirit shares in the divine power of creation—Gregory applies three epithets to the Spirit: τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα τῇ ἑαυτοῦ φύσει τίμιον, ἔνδοξον, δυνατὸν (*Maced* GNO III.I. 97,28–29). Gregory here develops the might, the power of the Spirit and of the two other divine persons in relation to the creation. The three divine persons are connected in their work of creation by the divine power, of which the Father is the source, while the Son is the power of the Father personified, and the Spirit is the spirit of the power. In this way, the one divine δύναμις becomes an image of the divine Trinity.¹⁴¹

bewegung des ungeschaffenes Gottes" and are therefore subject to change: if it acts in accordance with its nature, this change will always be for the better; if it deviates from the right path, it will be for the worse: "Das ist, was man die dialektische Ambivalenz der Schöpfungsbewegung nennen kann."

140 WERNER JAEGER, *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre*, 39, has argued: "Gregor faßt seine (sc. the Spirit's) rettende Funktion als Teil der Schöpfung auf, indem er das Werk der Schöpfung und die göttliche Ökonomie der Erlösung des Menschen offenbar als Einheit versteht ... Zu Ende gedacht führt diese Vorstellung zu der Idee einer sich auch in der Gegenwart noch fortsetzenden spirituellen Schöpfung."

141 GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 247, has judged the passage on the three divine persons and the one divine δύναμις is particularly striking "because it clearly shows the development of Gregory's theology in respect both of that of Origen and Basil". The distinction in the single act of the divine persons is no longer located in what a divine person does, but in how the divine person acts: as the source of the power, as the power, or as the spirit of the power. JAROSLAV PELIKAN, *The Christian Tradition. A History of the Development of Doctrine, I The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100–600)*, Chicago 1971, 223, has commented in relation to this *locus* (ἀλλὰ πηγὴ μὲν δυνάμεως ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ, δύναμις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,1–3): "Specifically on the question of distinctions among the Three, he identified causality as the only real point of distinction, stating that one was the cause, namely the Father, and that the Son and the

What does Gregory's claim that the Spirit is the spirit of the divine power mean?
 Gregory adopts a striking and original position in *Maced*.

The three divine persons share in the divine power (of creation), of which the Father is the source, while the Son is the power of the Father, and the Spirit is the spirit of the power:

ἀλλὰ πηγὴ μὲν δυνάμεως ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ, δύναμις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον.

Maced GNO III.1. 100,1–3

When it comes to the relation between the Father and the Son, and to the necessity to demonstrate the divine nature of the Son, and to conclude that, given existence of the same power, there is one single divine nature, Gregory (like Athanasius before him) also regards the Scriptural passage 1 Cor 1:24, where Paul calls Christ the power and the wisdom of God (Χριστὸν θεοῦ δυνάμιν καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν), as a key text that Scripturally establishes the eternal divinity of the Son and presupposes a single divine nature, see for instance *Eun* III GNO II. 32,13–15:

When you say that the Lord once was not, you will not merely be conceding that Power did not exist, but you will be saying that the power of God did not exit, him who is the Father of the Power.¹⁴²

Accepting that there was a time that the Son did not exist, Gregory argues, inevitably leads to the conclusion that there was a time that the Father did not exist either, as the Son is his power and wisdom, see *Eun* III GNO II. 204,7–12. In *Eun* III GNO II. 147,8–12, the works of the Son are called the works of the Father, because the Son is the power of the Father. From the power of the Father, which is the Son, the activity emanates (ὅ γὰρ τῆς δυνάμεως ἐνέργεια, *Eun* III GNO II. 147,11) that leads to the works of the Son and therefore of the Father.¹⁴³ In *Ref Eun* (of the year 383) GNO II. 341,5–11, Gregory speaks of the creation that is brought about thanks to the single will of God, which is the same as God's

Spirit were derived from him, but eternally. In this one cause was the guarantee of the unity of the Three."

142 *Eun* III GNO II. 32,13–15: ἐν γὰρ τῷ εἰπεῖν ποτε μὴ εἶναι τὸν κύριον οὐχ ἀπλῶς δώσεις τὸ μὴ εἶναι τὴν δυνάμιν, ἀλλὰ τοῦ θεοῦ μὴ εἶναι λέξεις τὴν δυνάμιν, τοῦ πατρὸς τῆς δυνάμεως (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

143 MICHEL BARNES, *The Power of God*, 296, has rightly pointed out that 1 Cor 1:24 can serve as Scriptural basis for the divinity of the Son, as long as the term 'Christ as the power of God' is interpreted ontologically.

power, δύναμις γάρ ἐστὶν ἡ βούλησις, *Ref Eun* GNO II. 341,11. It is Christ who is God's power and wisdom. The unity of nature between the Son and the Father is based on the one power of the Father and the Son. In the same work, *Ref Eun* GNO II. 402,24–26, Gregory attempts to use the analogy of the unity of nature between the Father and the Son on the basis of one single power—one single nature to argue for the unity of nature between the Father and the Spirit on the basis of the idea that joint activity presupposes a single nature:

consequently, the identity of activity proves that the Spirit is not at all outside the nature of the Father and the Son.¹⁴⁴

A similar argument can be found in *Eust* GNO III.I. 11,3–15: the identity of activity leads to the conclusion that there is unity of nature: ἀνάγκη τῇ ταυτότητι τῆς ἐνεργείας τὸ ἡνωμένον τῆς φύσεως συλλογίσεσθαι, *Eust* GNO III.I. 11,14–15.¹⁴⁵

In *Abl* GNO III.I. 47,24–48,2, Gregory uses almost identical terms as in *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,9–11 (ἐκ πατρὸς ἀρχομένην καὶ δι' υἱοῦ προϊούσαν καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ τελειουμένην) in reference to the single activity that proceeds from the three divine persons:

Rather does every operation which extends from God to creation and is designated according to our differing conceptions of it have its origin in the Father, proceed through the Son, and reach its completion by the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁶

144 *Ref Eun* GNO II. 402,24–26: οὐκ οὖν τὸ μὴ ἀπεξενῶσθαι πάντως τῆς τε τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ φύσεως τὸ πνεῦμα διὰ τῆς ταυτότητος τῶν ἐνεργημάτων παρίσταται.

145 GIULIO MASPERO, *Trinity and Man*, 31–45, has convincingly demonstrated that ἡ ἐνέργεια must be translated as *activity*, *act*.

146 *Abl* GNO III.I. 47,24–48,2: ἀλλὰ πᾶσα ἐνέργεια ἡ θεόθεν ἐπὶ τὴν κτίσιν διήκουσα καὶ κατὰ τὰς πολυτρόπους ἐννοίας ὀνομαζομένη ἐκ πατρὸς ἀφορμάται καὶ διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ πρόεισι καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ τελειοῦται (transl. by CYRIL C. RICHARDSON). ANNA MARMODORO, Gregory of Nyssa on the Metaphysics of the Trinity (with Reference to his Letter *To Ablabius*), in: ANNA MARMODORO & NEIL B. MCLYNN (ed.), *Exploring Gregory of Nyssa—Philosophical, Theological, and Historical Studies*, Oxford 2018, 220–234, p. 234 has, on the basis of *Abl*, described Gregory's own solution for the philosophical problem of the one and the many, a solution distinct from Plato's and Aristotle's metaphysical solutions. "Applied to the Trinity, this theory enables Gregory to hold that the nature of God is one, and it is the total quantity of what is divine in the world. What is divine in the world are the Persons of the Trinity, who are three in our apprehension only, from the perspective of their differentiation by the peculiar qualities. Nevertheless, what is real is the nature of the divine, God."

The special feature of Gregory's position in *Maced* is that he lucidly connects the two concepts he applies (one power—one nature in the case of the divinity of Father and Son on the one hand, and identity of activity—one nature in the case of the divinity of Father, Son, *and* Spirit) with each other by calling the Father the source of the power, the Son the power, and the Spirit the spirit of the power, so that he is able to describe nature, which came about in the creation as an activity of the Trinity, as beginning with the Father, proceeding through the mediation of the Son, and being brought to fulfilment in the Holy Spirit. In doing so, he introduces the Spirit into the divine δύναμις in a natural way as the spirit of the power, so that the Spirit can share fully in the one power of creation possessed by God, who is Father and Son *and* Spirit.¹⁴⁷ The unity of activity of the Trinity flows from the immanent connection between the three divine persons. By calling the Spirit the spirit of the power, the power which is the Son, Gregory points to the intimate union between the Son and the Spirit, as he will do this later on in *Maced* GNO III.I. 103,1–7, in his description of the Son as the king and the Spirit as the kingship, the oil with which the king is anointed:

For just as neither reason nor sense perception can conceive of anything intervening between the body's surface and the oil's anointing, so too is the Son's connection to the Holy Spirit seamless. Accordingly, the one who would touch him by faith must first have contact with the ointment, since there is not any part of him devoid of the Holy Spirit.

In Oratio III of *Or dom*, Gregory states that every action is the result of God's power (Πᾶσα γὰρ ἐνέργεια δυνάμεώς ἐστὶν ἀποτελέσμα, *Or dom* SC 418,3; GNO VII.II. 41,7), and from the identity of activity and of power he concludes (*Or dom* SC 420,7–8; GNO VII.II. 42,5–6) that the Spirit and the Son share the same nature, and through the Son, that the Spirit and the Father share the same

¹⁴⁷ BERNARD POTTIER, *Dieu et le Christ*, 364, has noted the importance of this passage. He speaks of the “triple causalité unique de la création” that can already be found in Irenaeus and in Basil, inspired by the Stoics. Pottier has described the specificity of the passage about the Spirit as the spirit of the divine power in *Maced* as follows: “Le traité *Maced* porte la même affirmation, mais en élargit le contexte métaphysique.” Because MICHEL BARNES, *The Power of God*, 297–307, did not include the *locus* in *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,1–3 (ἀλλὰ πηγὴ μὲν δυνάμεώς ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ, δύναμις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον) in his argument about the “Activity-Based Argument for the Divinity of the Holy Spirit”, his contention (p. 305) “It is the strong scripturally-based, Christological connotation of power, that, in a polemical context, deters any application to the Spirit” is incorrect.

nature: “it follows that the nature of the Trinity has been shown to be single.”¹⁴⁸ He argues by presupposing a variant of Luke’s Gospel 11:2b. Instead of *Your kingdom come*, as in Mt 6:10a (‘Ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου, *Or dom* III SC 412,17–414,1; GNO VII.II. 39,18), Gregory reads the following passage in Luke’s Gospel: “Let your Holy Spirit come to us and purify us.” (‘Ἐλθέτω τὸ πνεῦμά σου τὸ ἅγιον ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς καὶ καθαρισάτω ἡμᾶς, *Or dom* SC 414,1–2; GNO VII.II. 39,18–19). Gregory then immediately lashes out at his opponents, calls them “people with an impertinent tongue against the Spirit” (οἱ θρασυστομοῦντες κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, *Or dom* SC 414,3; GNO VII.II. 39,20), uses Luke’s variant of the passage in Matthew to equate the Spirit with the kingship and to conclude on the basis of the identical activity of the Spirit and the Son (the cleansing of sins; only God can forgive sins) that there is identity of activity, on that basis that there is unity of power, and on that basis that there is unity of nature, i.e. the divine nature. He had already demonstrated the unity of nature of Father and Son before.¹⁴⁹

5.4 *Because the Spirit Belongs Inseparably to the Divine Nature Together with the Father and the Son, the Honour We Bring Him Will Always Remain Less Than the Honour He Is Due* (GNO III.I. 100,12–101,3)

5.4.1 Greek Text

(100,12) Ταῦτα ἡμεῖς ἰδιωτικῶς καὶ κατὰ τὸν συνήθη τρόπον ἡμῖν ἐννοοῦντες τὰ σοφὰ ταῦτα τῶν ἀνθυποφερόντων οὐ προσιέμεθα πιστεύοντες καὶ ὁμολογοῦντες ἐν παντὶ πράγματι (100,15) καὶ νοήματι ἐγκοσμίῳ τε καὶ ὑπερκοσμίῳ καὶ τοῖς ἐν χρόνῳ καὶ τοῖς προαιωνίοις μετὰ πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον καταλαμβάνεσθαι μήτε βουλήματος μήτε ἐνεργείας μήτε ἄλλου τινὸς τῶν κατὰ τὸ ἀγαθὸν εὐσεβῶς νοουμένων ἀπολειπόμενον· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐκτὸς τῆς κατὰ τάξιν καὶ (100,20) ὑπόστασιν διαφορᾶς ἐν οὐδενὶ τὸ παρηλλαγμένον καταλαμβάνομεν, ἀλλὰ τρίτον μὲν τῇ ἀκολουθείᾳ φαμὲν μετὰ πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν ἀριθμῆσθαι, τρίτον δὲ καὶ τῇ τάξει τῆς παραδόσεως· ἐν δὲ τοῖς λοιποῖς πᾶσιν ἀχώριστον τὴν συνάφειαν ὁμολογοῦντες ἐν φύσει καὶ ἐν τιμῇ καὶ ἐν θεότητι καὶ δόξῃ καὶ μεγάλῃ (100,25) λοπρεπείᾳ καὶ τῇ ἐπὶ πάντων ἐξουσίᾳ καὶ

148 *Or dom* III (SC 420,7–8; GNO VII.II. 42,5–6): μία κατὰ τὸ ἀκόλουθον ἀποδεδείκται τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος ἡ φύσις (transl. by ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ).

149 JOHANNES ZACHHUBER, *The Soul as Dynamis in Gregory of Nyssa's On the Soul and Resurrection*, in: ANNA MARMODORO & NEIL B. MCLYNN (ed.), *Exploring Gregory of Nyssa—Philosophical, Theological, and Historical Studies*, Oxford 2018, 142–159, pp. 148–150, has demonstrated on the basis of *An et res* the close and inextricable connection that Gregory draws between the soul's substance and power, an insoluble unity of being and power, in analogy with Gregory's “quasi-axiomatic assumption that God's power operating within the world is inseparable from his transcendent nature” (p. 148).

τῇ εὐσεβεί ὁμολογίᾳ. περὶ δὲ λατρείας καὶ προσκυνήσεως καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα μικρολογούντες προφέρουσιν οἱ σοφοὶ παρ' ἑαυτοῖς, ἐκεῖνα λέγομεν, ὅτι πάντων τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν γινομένων ἐκ προαιρέσεως ἀνθρωπίνης ὑψηλότερόν ἐστι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· καὶ (100,30) ἡ προσκύνησις ἡμῶν ταπεινότερα ἐστὶ τῆς χρεωστούμενης τιμῆς καί, εἴ τι ἄλλο ἢ ἀνθρωπίνη συνήθεια τίμιον ἔχει, κάτω που τῆς ἀξίας ἐστὶ τοῦ πνεύματος· τὸ γὰρ τῇ φύσει ἀμέτρητον μείζον ἐστὶ τῶν ἀπὸ μικρᾶς καὶ περιγεγραμμένης καὶ εὐτελοῦς δυνάμεως τὰ κατὰ δύνανμιν αὐτῷ δωροφο-(101,1)ρούντων. ταῦτα μὲν οὖν φαμεν πρὸς τοὺς συντιθεμένους τῇ εὐσεβεστέρα περὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ὑπολήψει, ὅτι τε θεῖόν ἐστι καὶ φύσεως θείας.

5.4.2 Translation

(100,12) Since we understand these things in an ordinary and everyday manner, we do not accept these sophisms of our opponents. We believe and confess that the Holy Spirit must be grasped together with Father and Son in every deed and every concept, whether in the world, beyond the world, in time, or before the age, since it does not fall short of them in will, activity, or in any other of the things which are piously thought of in association with goodness. For this reason, apart from the difference in order and in subsistence, we comprehend no variation [among them] in any respect. Instead, while we maintain that it is numbered third in the sequence after Father and Son, and third in the order of the tradition,¹⁵⁰ we confess its inseparable connection in all other respects: in nature, honor, deity, glory, majesty, omnipotence, and in the pious confession.

As for adoration and worship and all such things that these hair-splitting sages bring up on their own behalf, we say the following: the Holy Spirit is loftier than all honors that arise among us on the basis of human free choice*. Our worship is of less worth than the honor we owe. Indeed, if human custom holds anything else as honorable, it is somewhere below the dignity of the Spirit. For what is immeasurable by nature is greater than those who, from a meager, limited, and fleeting capacity, offer to it those offerings that it can manage.

(101) To those who agree with the more pious idea about the Holy Spirit, we say this: it is divine and belongs to the divine nature.

5.4.3 Paraphrase

Even with the difference in person and in order (as third in the sequence), the Spirit, who is inseparably connected with the Father and the Son, is divine and his dignity transcends everything that is honourable among human beings.

¹⁵⁰ ARG: That is, the baptismal tradition based on Mt 28:19: "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

Our worship of the Spirit must therefore, as a matter of principle, fall short of the honour he is due.

5.4.4 Sub-questions

With what characterisations does Gregory assail his opponents here and does he contrast himself with them?

After Gregory in his first response to his opponents contended that the divinity and the full glory of the Spirit make him equal in honour and dignity to the Father and the Son, at the end of his second response—that the Spirit shares in the divine power of creation—he draws the conclusion that the Spirit is inseparably linked with the Father and the Son and transcends in dignity everything that is honourable among human beings. At the end of his second response, Gregory once again emphasises that his is the more pious view of the Holy Spirit, the expression of simple and familiar faith, and he therefore opposes those who use sophisms against him, and who, in their pedantry and small-mindedness, convince themselves of these. He characterises his opponents as sages, οἱ σοφοί, who cling to their own mean-spirited ideas when it comes to adoration and worship:

περὶ δὲ λατρείας καὶ προσκυνήσεως καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα μικρολογούντες προφέρουσιν οἱ σοφοὶ παρ' ἑαυτοῖς.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,26–27

The arguments they advance against Gregory are pedantic sophisms (*Maced GNO III.I. 100,13*): τὰ σοφὰ ταῦτα τῶν ἀνθυποφερόντων. They stand in contrast with the following:

To those who agree with the more pious idea about the Holy Spirit, we say this: it is divine and belongs to the divine nature.

Maced GNO III.I. 101,1–3

Gregory repeatedly refers to simple and pious faith as an argument. The preceding, profound discourse about the divine power that is manifested in the creation is in fact, Gregory says, a simple and familiar way of seeing things: ἰδιωτικῶς καὶ κατὰ τὸν συνήθη τρόπον, *Maced GNO III.I. 100,12*, just as, in *Eun III*, the Church *simply* (ταῦτα τοίνυν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἰδιωτικῶς διδασκούσης, *Eun III GNO II. 83,27–28*) teaches that the Only-Begotten One is God in his essence, true God from the essence of the true God. Gregory here uses the significant word ὁμολογούντες in combination with πιστεύοντες, after twice confessing his belief about the Holy Spirit using the verb ὁμολογέω (ὅσα τοῖς τῶν πατέρων ἐπόμενοι δόγμασιν

ὁμολογοῦμεν περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος, *Maced GNO III.I. 89,18–19*; ἡμῶν γὰρ συντετάχθαι τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ υἱῷ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ὁμολογούντων, *Maced GNO III.I. 89,21–22*) at the beginning of his work, against the impiety of his opponents. In his introduction to his four responses, too, he proclaimed his belief in the divinity of the Spirit on the basis of Scripture and the common notions using this same verb:

θείας δὲ φύσεως (εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα) ὁμολογούντες οὐδεμίαν ἐπιγινώσκουμεν οὔτε ἐκ τῆς τῶν γραφῶν διδασκαλίας οὔτε ἐκ τῶν κοινῶν ἐννοιῶν κατ’ αὐτὸ τοῦτο διαφορὰν.

Maced GNO III.I. 90,27–30

Gregory underlines the importance of his statement by adding καὶ ὁμολογούντες το πιστεύοντες: believing with the heart and professing with the mouth are reflected in “which is piously thought of in association with goodness” (τῶν κατὰ τὸ ἀγαθὸν εὐσεβῶς νοουμένων, *GNO III.I. 100,18*) and “we confess its inseparable connection in all other respects” (ἐν δὲ τοῖς λοιποῖς πᾶσιν ἀχώριστον τὴν συνάφειαν ὁμολογούντες, *GNO III.I. 100,23–24*). It is clear from the ponderous addition (*Maced GNO III.I. 100,14–16*):

in every deed and every concept, whether in the world, beyond the world, in time, or before the age.

that Gregory here, in the conclusion of his second response, once again with full force states his belief in and his confession of the inseparable connection between the Spirit and the Father and the Son, and thus of the full participation of the Spirit in the divine work of creation.

What distinction does Gregory make between the divine persons, given their inseparability?

Gregory makes a distinction in sequence and in person. The divine persons have a sequence and an order. The Spirit is counted third in the sequence, after the Father and the Son. In the order as it is given by tradition, the Spirit occupies third place. The inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία (the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the mediation of the Son and is enumerated after the Father and the Son) is manifested in the ἀκολουθία with which creation comes into being: beginning with the Father (ἐκ πατρός, *Maced GNO III.I. 100,9*), continuing through the mediation of the Son (δι’ υἱοῦ, *GNO III.I. 100,10*) and being fulfilled in the Spirit (ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ, *GNO III.I. 100,10*). The ἀκολουθία that is visible within creation is reflected in the ἀκολουθία that is visible within the history of salvation and that, as the *exitus* of God (the Son who goes out from

the Father to humankind and bestows the Spirit upon it) makes the *reditus* of human beings possible. In this *reditus* the inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία is again important: human beings follow the reverse order: in the Spirit, through the mediation of the Son, to the Father.

Gregory also mentions the order as given by tradition: τῇ τάξει τῆς παραδόσεως (*Maced* GNO III.1. 100,22).¹⁵¹ He refers here to the baptismal command of Mt 28:19. Further on, Gregory will speak of the life-creating power of the baptismal water. In the description of the power of baptism, which gives the life that is no longer subject to death, this life comes to human beings from the Father as if from a source, through the mediation of the Son, thanks to the activity of the Spirit. The inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία is manifested here as the soteriological ἀκολουθία. The order of Mt 28:19 is also fundamental for the way in which salvation comes to human beings. In *Ref Eun* GNO II. 312,3–320,5, Mt 28:19 functions as the key text on the basis of which Gregory, in opposition to the θεομάχοι (cf. *Ref Eun* GNO II. 314,6), among he also counts Eunomius, emphasises the connection between revelation, faith, and baptism, and describes the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity and of Christ's work of redemption.¹⁵² In the part *Ref Eun* GNO II. 316,19–317,17, Gregory describes, in view of the ἀκολουθία of Mt 28:19, which indicates the distinct identities of the three divine persons but respects the ineffability of the essence of God, how the Spirit, as the Spirit of the Son, is eternally connected with the Son and the Father.¹⁵³

151 Given the many *loci* in which Gregory uses παράδοσις as tradition (*Lexicon Gregorianum* VII, col. 87–88, s.v. παράδοσις) there is no reason why RICHARD P.C. HANSON, *The Search*, 785 n. 249, should doubt its meaning here.

152 MICHEL J. VAN PARYS, Exégèse et théologie dans les livres *Contre Eunome* de Grégoire de Nysse: textes scripturaires controversés et élaboration théologique, in: MARGUERITE HARL (ed.), *Écriture et culture philosophique dans la pensée de Grégoire de Nysse*, Leiden 1971, 169–196, gives a succinct analysis of *Ref Eun* GNO II. 313,25–319,15 on pp. 190–192. He speaks on p. 190 of the ἀκολουθία of Mt 28:19, which Gregory is eager to demonstrate is in perfect harmony with the orthodox dogma of the Trinity. This shows, Van Parys argues, “la hardiesse spéculative de sa (i.e. Gregory's) théologie.”

153 SARAH COAKLEY, Gregory of Nyssa on Spiritual Ascent and Trinitarian Orthodoxy: a Reconsideration of the Relation between Doctrine and Askesis, in: GIULIO MASPERO & MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS & ILARIA VIGORELLI (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: In Canticum Cantorum. Analytical and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 13th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Rome, 17–20 September 2014)* (VCS 150), Leiden 2018, 360–375, p. 373, thinks, mistakenly I believe, that Gregory's vision of the Trinity has changed in *Cant* compared to his earlier dogmatic works, for instance because there is “a shift of emphasis away from a consistently ordered hierarchy or *taxis* (Father-Son-Spirit) to a dialectical ‘adoptive child of God’ incorporation via the Spirit into union with Christ.” The contrast that Coakley observes between the *taxis* on the one hand and dialectical incorporation

What preliminary conclusion does Gregory draw concerning the honour due to the Spirit?

In view of the distinction in person and sequence, the mutual connection between the divine persons is inseparable, Gregory and his allies confess:

in nature, honor, deity, glory, majesty, omnipotence, and in the pious confession.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,24–26

With regard to the human response to this, their adoration and worship (περὶ δὲ λατρείας καὶ προσκυνήσεως, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,26), the Spirit by definition transcends whatever honour people on the basis of their own freedom of choice are capable of giving the Spirit. If the Spirit belongs to the divine nature, then the honour that human beings render to the Spirit is a form of apophasis in action and word, because human beings are unable to do justice in their actions and words to the all-transcending glory and honour of the Spirit. In this conclusion of Gregory's second response—the Spirit shares in the divine power of creation and thus in the divine glory—he returns to the start of his second response to his opponents, who are stingy in the honour they render to the Spirit, as it has been shown in *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,24–26, that

has been shown that the honor that belongs properly to the divine nature is not made full by our free choice, but rather exists with it naturally.

The term human freedom of choice, human decision of the will (ἐκ τῆς προαιρέσεως ἡμῶν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,24–25; ἐκ προαιρέσεως ἀνθρωπίνης, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,28–29) occurs both at the beginning of the second response and at its conclusion. It will become clear in the continuation that this concept plays a role of great importance in the human adoration of the Triune Godhead.

What audience does Gregory have in mind when he expresses his more pious idea of the Spirit?

There appears to be a shift in audience at the end of Gregory's second response. Whereas in the first part he consistently addresses his opponents, here (*Maced*

on the other is not present in *Maced* or in *Cant*. The two works do differ from each other, understandably so given their diverging orientation, in the degree to which they use metaphor and in the way metaphors are used.

GNO III.I. 101,1–3) he states that he is communicating his vision on the Spirit's fullness of honour:

To those who agree with the more pious idea about the Holy Spirit, we say this: it is divine and belongs to the divine nature.

To those, therefore, who agree with him that the Spirit belongs to the divine nature. Gregory appears to be returning here to the beginning of his work, where he said he did not intend to keep silent in order to ensure that the healthy understanding of the faith would not be mutilated by the rotting gangrene of heresy (i.e. the Spirit does not belong fully to the divine nature):

But there is a danger that, through our silence, falsehood will overpower the truth and, when this rotting gangrene of heresy has spread itself widely against the truth, it will completely wreck the healthy teaching of the faith.

Maced GNO III.I. 89,4–8

Precisely at this point, at the conclusion of the second response, Gregory reveals his purpose in writing his work. He hopes that his attack on the Pneumatomachi, whom Gregory henceforth no longer regards as Christians (ὅτι τοὺς οὕτως ἔχοντας ἐν Χριστιανοῖς ἀριθμεῖν οὐκ ἐμάθομεν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 101,10–11), will prevent the detrimental position of the Pneumatomachi from corrupting the orthodox believers in their faith, and that it will strengthen the insight and faith of his allies, the orthodox faithful.

6 Gregory's Third Response: The Spirit Shares in the Divine Glory and Gives of This

6.1 *They Who Confess the Divinity of the Father and the Son in Faith, but Refuse to Attribute This to the Spirit, Cannot Be Called Christians* (GNO III.I. 101,4–102,16)

6.1.1 Greek Text

(101,4) Εἰ δέ τις ἀθετοίῃ τὴν φωνὴν ταύτην καὶ τὴν διάνοιαν (101,5) τὴν τῷ ὀνόματι τῆς θεϊότητος συνεμφαινομένην, λέγοι δὲ τὸ παρὰ τῶν πολλῶν ἐπὶ καθαιρέσεως τῆς τοῦ πνεύματος μεγαλωσύνης περιφερόμενον, ὅτι οὐχὶ τῶν ποιούντων, ἀλλὰ τῶν ποιηθέντων ἐστὶ καὶ οὐχὶ τῆς θείας, ἀλλὰ τῆς κτιστῆς φύσεως εἶναι προσήκει νομίζειν, τοῦτον τὸν λόγον ἀποκρι-(101,10)νοῦμεθα· ὅτι τοὺς οὕτως ἔχοντας ἐν Χριστιανοῖς ἀριθμεῖν

οὐκ ἐμάθομεν. ὥσπερ γὰρ ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἂν τις προσείποι τὸ ἀτελεσφόρητον ἔμβρυον, ἀλλὰ δυνάμενον εἴπερ ἐτελεσφορήθη εἰς ἀνθρώπου γένεσιν προελθεῖν, ἕως δ' ἂν ἐν τῷ ἀτελεῖ ᾗ, ἄλλο τί ἐστὶ καὶ οὐκ ἄνθρωπος· οὕτως τὸν μὴ δι' (101,15) ὅλου τοῦ μυστηρίου τὴν ἀληθὴ μορφῶσιν τῆς εὐσεβείας δεξάμενον Χριστιανὸν οὐκ οἶδεν ὁ λόγος. ἔστι γὰρ καὶ Ἰουδαίων ἀκούειν θεὸν ὁμολογούντων καὶ θεὸν τὸν ἡμέτερον. συντίθεται αὐτοῖς ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ καὶ ὁ κύριος, ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλον νομίζουσι θεὸν ἢ τὸν πατέρα τοῦ μονογενοῦς, "Ὁν ὑμεῖς, (101,20) φησὶν, λέγετε ὅτι θεὸς ἡμῶν ἐστίν. ἄρ' οὖν Χριστιανούς ὀνομαστέον τοὺς Ἰουδαίους, ὅτι τὸν παρ' ἡμῶν προσκυνούμενον καὶ αὐτοὶ σέβειν ὁμολογοῦσιν; οἶδα καὶ Μανιχαίους τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ Χριστοῦ περιφέροντας. τί οὖν; ἐπειδὴ σεβάσμιον παρὰ τούτοις τὸ παρ' ἡμῶν προσκυνούμενον ὄνομα, (101,25) διὰ τοῦτο καὶ αὐτοὺς ἐν Χριστιανοῖς ἀριθμήσομεν; οὕτως καὶ ὁ τὸν πατέρα μὲν ὁμολογῶν καὶ τὸν υἱὸν παραδεχόμενος, ἀθετῶν δὲ τὴν μεγαλωσύνην τοῦ πνεύματος, ἡρνηται τὴν πίστιν καὶ ἐστὶν ἀπίστου χεῖρων καὶ τῆς ἐπωνυμίας τοῦ Χριστιανοῦ καταψεύδεται. ἄρτιον εἶναι κελεύει τὸν τοῦ (101,30) θεοῦ ἄνθρωπον ὁ ἀπόστολος. ἄρτιον δ' ἂν εἴη ἐπὶ μὲν τοῦ κοινοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὸ παντὶ λόγῳ συμπεπληρωμένον τῆς φύσεως· λογικὸν [τε] γὰρ εἶναι χρή, νοῦ καὶ ἐπιστήμης δεκτικόν, (102,1) ζωῆς μετέχον, ὄρθιον τῷ σχήματι, γελαστικόν, πλατυνώνυχον· εἰ δὲ ὀνομάζοι μὲν τις ἄνθρωπον, τὰ δὲ εἰρημένα σημεῖα τῆς φύσεως μὴ ἔχοι ἐπὶ τούτου παρέχεσθαι, μάτην ἐτίμησε τῷ προσρήματι. οὕτω καὶ ὁ Χριστιανὸς τῇ εἰς πατέρα (102,5) καὶ υἱὸν καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα πίστει χαρακτηρίζεται· αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μορφή τοῦ κατὰ τὸ μυστήριον τῆς ἀληθείας μεμορφωμένου. εἰ δὲ ἐτέρως ἡ μορφή διακειμένη τύχη, οὐχ ἐπιγνώσομαι τοῦ ἀμόρφου τὴν φύσιν· σύγχυσις ἐστὶ τοῦ χαρακτηρὸς καὶ τῆς κατὰ φύσιν μορφῆς ἁλλοτρίωσις καὶ παραλλαγή τῶν (102,10) γνωριστικῶν σημείων τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος, ὅταν μὴ συμπαραληφθῇ τῇ πίστει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. ἀληθεύει γὰρ τοῦ Ἐκκλησιαστοῦ ὁ λόγος· ὅτι οὗτος οὐχὶ ζῶν ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος, ἀλλὰ Ὁστὰ, καθὼς ἐκεῖνος φησὶν, ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ τῆς κυοφορούσης. πῶς γὰρ ὁμολογήσει Χριστὸν ὁ μὴ συνεπινοῶν τῷ (102,15) χρισθέντι τὸ χρίσμα; Τοῦτον ἔχρισε, φησὶν, ὁ θεὸς ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ.

6.1.2 Translation

(101,4) But perhaps someone rejects this term and the meaning manifested along with the name of divinity. Perhaps he would say what many are circulating in order to destroy the Spirit's majesty, namely, that it belongs not among those who make, but among those who are made and that we ought to consider that it is not of the divine, but of the created nature. If so, we will respond with this argument: we have not been taught to count those who hold such opinions as Christians. For no one would say that an unformed embryo is human, but rather that it has potential, when it has become fully formed, to advance to becoming human, whereas so long as it is incomplete, it is something else and not human. In the same way, reason does not recognize as Christian the one who has not received a true formation in piety—one that extends through

the entire mystery. After all, one can hear Jews confessing belief in God, indeed our God. Even the Lord agreed with them in the gospel that they do not recognize another God than the Father of the Only-Begotten. He says, "Of him, you say that he is our God." (Jn 8:54) Well then, should we call the Jews Christians because they too confess that they revere the one whom we worship? I acknowledge that even Manichees circulate the name of Christ. What then? Since the name that we worship is held in reverence among them, should we for this reason count them too as Christians? Likewise, the one who confesses the Father and accepts the Son but rejects the majesty of the Spirit "denies the faith and is worse than an unbeliever" (1 Tim 5:8) and belies the title "Christian". The apostle exhorts the godly person to be "proficient". (2 Tim 3:17) Now, in the case of human beings in general, proficiency would mean completion in every attribute of the nature.¹⁵⁴ For one must be rational, capable of intelligence and understanding, (102) partaking of life, upright in posture, capable of laughing, and with flat fingernails.¹⁵⁵ If someone were to call something human, but was unable to exhibit the aforementioned marks of the nature for this object, then he would honor it in vain with this title. In the same way, the Christian is characterized by faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. this is the form of the one who has been formed in the mystery of the truth. But if it happens that the form is arranged differently, I will not recognize the nature of what lacks form. Whenever the Holy Spirit is not included in the faith, there is a confusion of the characteristic, an alteration of the natural form, and a change of the identifying marks of humanity. For the word of Ecclesiastes is true: this one is not a living human being, but, as it says, "bones in the womb of a pregnant woman." (Eccles 11:5)

After all, how will one confess Christ if he does not understand the anointing together with him who is anointed? It says, "this one God anointed in the Holy Spirit." (Acts 10:38)

6.1.3 Paraphrase

They who confess the Father in faith, and in doing so include the Son, but debase the majesty of the Spirit and count the Spirit not among those who cre-

154 ARG: τὸ παντὶ λόγῳ συμπληρωμένον τῆς φύσεως. The language is technical, referring to the "essential components" of a nature, those properties that combine to form a nature's unique, definitive characteristics.

155 ARG: For precedents to Gregory's list see, for example, the dubious Platonic work *Definitions* 415a and Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Commentary on Aristotle's Topics* (M. Wallies, ed., *Alexandri Aphrodisiensis in Aristotelis topicorum libros octo commentaria*, Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca 2.2. [Berlin: Reimer, 1891], 45, 381).

ate, but among the created things, betray the Christian faith and make a lie of their name of Christian.

6.1.4 Sub-questions

Who can call themselves Christians?

Gregory begins his third response and turns to the Spirit as the distributor of the divine glory in which the Spirit himself fully partakes. It is not without reason that Gregory begins his third response by asking who can call themselves Christians. He explains on the basis of the definition of a Christian that the Spirit not only partakes in the divine glory and dwells in the immanence of the Trinity, but that the Spirit also permits human beings to share in his divine glory and draws them into the divine life, on condition that human beings confess their faith in the Trinity, God the Father, the Son, *and* the Spirit. Jews, Manichaeans, and unbelievers are presented as terrifying counterexamples.

Christians are people who, through the mediation of the whole (sacramental) mystery, have allowed themselves to receive the true formation in religion (δι' ὅλου τοῦ μυστηρίου τὴν ἀληθὴ μὀρφωσιν τῆς εὐσεβείας δεξάμενον, *Maced GNO III.I. 101,14–16*).¹⁵⁶ A little further in the text there is a passage that shows what this true formation in religion will lead to: true Christians are characterised (χαρακτηρίζεται, *Maced GNO III.I. 102,5*) by their belief in the Father and the Son *and* the Holy Spirit. The form, μορφή, of the true Christian is the result of this true formation (μὀρφωσις) in religion, the formation according to the sacramental mystery of the truth (ἡ μορφή τοῦ κατὰ τὸ μυστήριον τῆς ἀληθείας μεμορφωμένου, *Maced GNO III.I. 102,6–7*). The true formation of Christians takes place through the mediation of the sacramental mystery of the truth.

In *Eccl VI GNO V. 380,9–10*, the shape of the Christian is the shape of Christ who is formed in the Christian, following Paul's Gal 4:19 (μορφωθῇ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν):

Again, we miscarry and produce premature births or mere wind, when the shape of Christ, as the apostle (sc. Paulus) says, has not been formed in us. The man of God, he says, must be fully grown.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Gregory only uses the substantive μὀρφωσις here. WERNER JAEGER, *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre*, 2, rightly points out that the Holy Spirit plays a decisive role in the Christian's μὀρφωσις, in the development of human beings into true Christians, the image of God: "In diesem Prozess spielt der Hl. Geist eine entscheidende Rolle. Er wird hier zum Kern des christlichen Humanismus, d.h. eines christlichen Gegenstücks zur klassischen Paideia der Griechen, die ja ebenfalls aus dem natürlichen Menschen den wahren Menschen formen wollte."

¹⁵⁷ *Eccl VI GNO V. 380,7–10*: καὶ πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς ἀμβλίσκομεν καὶ ἀτελεσφορήτους τε καὶ ὑπνημένους

This formation is effected thanks to the faith mystery of the truth. The combination of *μορφή* and *μορφωθῆναι* can be found in *Perf* GNO VIII.I. 194,14–195,5, where it is used to explain the salvific purpose of the incarnation of the Son.¹⁵⁸

And He who transcends all knowledge and understanding, the indescribable and ineffable and inexplicable, so as to restore in you the image of God, himself too, out of charity, became image of the invisible God, so that he in his own form which he adopted, is formed in you and you, through his mediation, are formed according to the impress of the original beauty, to become that which you were from the beginning.¹⁵⁹

The Spirit plays a key role in this. Illumination by the Spirit is necessary for human beings to be able to come to the Only-Begotten One, who is the impress of the hypostasis of the Father:

And it is not possible to behold the *hypostasis* of the Father otherwise than by fixing the gaze upon it through his impress, and *the impress of the hypostasis* (Heb 1:3) of the Father is the Only-begotten (Jn 1:14,18), and again to him (sc. the Father) no one can draw near whose mind has not been illumined by the Holy Spirit (cf. 2 Cor 3:18; 4:6).¹⁶⁰

ἀπεργαζόμεθα, ὅταν μὴ μορφωθῇ ἐν ἡμῖν, καθὼς φησιν ὁ ἀπόστολος, ἡ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μορφή. δεῖ γὰρ εἶναι, φησὶν, ἄρτιον τὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπον (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

158 JOHANNES ZACHHUBER, *Human Nature in Gregory of Nyssa. Philosophical Background and Theological Significance* (VCS 46), Leiden 2000, 191, has quoted this passage to demonstrate that in Gregory's view the salvation of human beings takes place first and foremost through the imitation of Christ. Zachhuber speaks on p. 190 of "The 'humanistic' solution: salvation through imitation of Christ", which places Gregory in the tradition of Origen. The passage mentioned above in *Maced* shows that part of the imitation of Christ is the initiation into the mysteries of the faith, of which confessing belief in the Father and the Son and the Spirit is an essential part.

159 *Perf* GNO VIII.I. 194,14–195,5: οὗτος τοίνυν ὁ ὑπερέκεινα πάσης γνώσεως τε καὶ κατὰλήψεως, ὁ ἄφρατος καὶ ἀνεκλάλητος καὶ ἀνεκδιήγητος, ἵνα σε ποιήσῃ πάλιν εἰκόνα θεοῦ, καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπὸ φιλανθρωπίας ἐγένετο εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, ὥστε τῇ ἰδίᾳ μορφῇ, ἣν ἀνέλαβεν, ἐν σοὶ μορφωθῆναι καὶ σὲ πάλιν δι' ἑαυτοῦ πρὸς τὸν χαρακτῆρα τοῦ ἀρχετύπου συσχηματισθῆναι κάλλους, εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὅπερ ἦς ἐξ ἀρχῆς.

160 *Eust* GNO III.I. 13,13–17: οὐκ ἔστι δὲ ἄλλως ἰδεῖν τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς ὑπόστασιν μὴ διὰ τοῦ χαρακτῆρος εἰς αὐτὴν ἀτενίσαντα, ὁ δὲ χαρακτήρ τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς ὑποστάσεως ὁ μονογενὴς ἐστί, τοῦτ' αὖ δὲ πάλιν οὐκ ἂν τις προσεγγίσειε μὴ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι καταυγασθεὶς τὴν διάνοιαν (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

What comparisons does Gregory use to strengthen his vision of the Christian?

People who count the Spirit among the created reality and who thus demonstrate that they lack the true formation in religion, are like an immature embryo (τὸ ἀτελεσφόρητον ἔμβρυον, *Maced GNO III.I. 101,12*), which cannot yet be called human but is a potential human being. Only when the embryo, which consists of body *and* soul from the start, is carried to term can it be called a human being, after its birth as a human being. Gregory regards the embryo as very imperfect, as is clear subsequently when he compares the nature of a misshapen individual who lacks the specific characteristics of the human being to the nature of the embryo: bones in the womb of a pregnant woman. This is a quotation from Eccles LXX 11:5: Ὅστᾱ, καθὼς ἐκείνος φησὶν, ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ τῆς κυοφορούσης, *Maced GNO III.I. 102,13–14*. Gregory deduces from the use of ὅστᾱ that Ecclesiastes before him believed that the embryo is not yet a living human being.¹⁶¹ Gregory speaks here about the embryo in negative terms only because imperfection is the *tertium comparationis*. He deprecates the believer who does not recognise the Holy Spirit in his divinity and who has thus failed to reach the full measure of the Christian, and compares such a Christian to an immature foetus who is yet to develop into a human being.¹⁶²

In the continuation, Gregory follows Paul's example (2Tim 3:17) by speaking of the human person belonging to God who is perfectly equipped and has reached full maturity, and who can be known by the specific characteristics of human nature. Such a full-fledged human being is contrasted with a misshapen

161 HUBERTUS R. DROBNER, Verwendung und Bedeutung des Buches *Ecclesiastes* im Werk Gregors von Nyssa außerhalb der *Homiliae in Ecclesiasten*, in: STUART G. HALL (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa, Homilies on Ecclesiastes: An English Version with Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Seventh International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—St. Andrews 5–10 September 1990*, Berlin 1993, 361–383, p. 364, asks whether Gregory, in the context of his theology of image and of redemption, intended to say that heresy has physical consequences and that heretical human beings are not full images of God given the mutilated primal image of the Son whose divinity the heretic denies. The answer to this question, I believe, is negative: Drobner does not take account sufficiently of metaphor, of which Gregory was an avid user in his rhetoric.

162 MARIETTE CANÉVET, L'humanité de l'embryon selon Grégoire de Nysse, in: *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 114 (1992) 678–695, describes what Gregory says about the development of the embryo in relation to the creation of the human soul, which occurs at the same time as conception. MARIE-HÉLÈNE CONGOURDEAU, *L'embryon et son âme dans les sources grecques (vie siècle av. J.-C.–ve siècle apr. J.-C.)*, Paris 2007, 286–287, demonstrates on the basis of *Antirrō* GNO III.I. 223,15–25 that Gregory was not an adherent of traducianism (the doctrine that the human soul is implanted in the foetus through reproduction). The life-creating power of God provides for the genesis of body *and* soul, with becoming the image of God as its ultimate end.

individual. A human being who refuses to include the Spirit in his or her faith, is compared to a misshapen individual, by contrast with the fully equipped human being to whom he or she is compared who is formed in the mystery of the truth and who confesses his or her faith in the Father and the Son *and* the Holy Spirit. The specific characteristics of human nature are ingrained in human beings to such an extent that they do not change, not even in baptism as rebirth, Gregory says in *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 102,15–19:

Yet baptism produces no essential change in human nature. Neither reason nor understanding, nor capacity for knowledge, nor anything else that marks human nature, undergoes a change.¹⁶³

These are the enduring, unchangeable characteristics that fully equip a human being:

For one must be rational, capable of intelligence and understanding, partaking of life, upright in posture, capable of laughing, and with flat fingernails.

Maced GNO III.I. 101,32–102,2

It is to such a fully equipped human being that he or she is compared who is formed by the mystery of the truth and who confesses his or her faith in the Father and the Son *and* the Holy Spirit. This person is contrasted with an immature embryo, and subsequently with a misshapen individual who lacks certain specific characteristics of the fully equipped human being. A human being who does not include the Spirit in his or her faith is a deficient Christian, a monstrosity.¹⁶⁴

In the preceding passage, Gregory qualifies simple faith in the one God, such as that which the Jews profess, or simply using the name of Christ, as Manichaeans do, as insufficient to justify the name of Christian.

163 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 102,15–19: ἀλλὰ μὴν ἡ ἀνθρωπότης αὐτὴ καθ' ἑαυτὴν μεταβολὴν ἐκ τοῦ βαπτίσματος οὐ προσίεται οὔτε τὸ λογικόν οὔτε τὸ διανοητικόν οὔτε τὸ ἐπιστήμης δεκτικόν οὐδὲ ἄλλο τι τῶν χαρακτηριζόντων ἰδίως τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν ἐν μεταποιήσει γίνεται (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

164 VASILE RADUCA, *ἈΛΛΟΤΡΙΩΣΙΣ. La chute et la restauration de l'homme selon Saint Grégoire de Nysse, publication partielle de la thèse présentée à la Faculté de Théologie de l'Université de Fribourg, Suisse pour obtenir le grade de docteur*, Fribourg 1985, *passim*, has shown that the concept of ἄλλοτρίωσις can represent both aversion to the good as a sign of the fall of a human being, and aversion to evil as human recovery.

In *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 14,3–5, Gregory points out what the Jews lack: faith in the incarnate Logos and in the Spirit who, as divine persons, share in the divine nature of the one God, Father, Son, and Spirit: “the teaching of the Jew is invalidated by the acceptance of the Word and by belief in the Spirit.”¹⁶⁵ Gregory continues (*Or cat* GNO III.IV. 14,11–12): “the triune number is, as it were, a remedy for those (sc. the Jews) in error about the unity.”¹⁶⁶ Just like the pagan Greek is in need of a means of salvation, specifically the doctrine of the unity of the divine nature (*Or cat* GNO III.IV. 14,12–13): “the affirmation of the unity is a remedy for those who scatter their beliefs among a multitude of [gods].”¹⁶⁷ Christianity is the right middle course between Judaism, which overemphasises the unity, and Hellenism, which abandons itself to polytheism.¹⁶⁸ Both the Greek and the Jew regard the incarnation of the Logos as implausible and unworthy of God (*Or cat* GNO III.IV. 15,18–20).¹⁶⁹

In the continuation of *Maced*, Gregory repeatedly returns to the faith of the Jews which he regards as deficient. In *Maced* GNO III.I. 102,21–22 he speaks of the Jewish veil which makes it impossible to accept the kingship of the Only-Begotten One.¹⁷⁰

Do they not believe that the Only-Begotten is king by nature? They won't deny it unless they have covered their heart once for all with the Jewish veil (cf. 2 Cor 3:15).

165 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 14,3–5: τοῦ μὲν γὰρ Ἰουδαίου καθαιρεῖται τὸ δόγμα τῇ τε τοῦ λόγου παραδοχῇ καὶ τῇ πίστει τοῦ πνεύματος (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

166 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 14,11–12: ἔστι γὰρ ὥσπερ θεραπεία τῶν μὲν περὶ τὸ ἔν πλανωμένων ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῆς τριάδος (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

167 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 14,12–13: τῶν δὲ εἰς πλῆθος ἐσκεδασμένων ὁ τῆς ἐνοτήτος λόγος (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

168 As VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL has observed in his book *Die Entwicklung der Trinitätslehre des Basilius von Cäsarea. Sein Weg vom Homöusianer zum Neonizäner*, Göttingen 1996, 11 n. 37.

169 In *Pent* GNO X.II. 288,4, Gregory chooses a different approach, viz. a sequence with progression: the life-giving power of the Triune Godhead leads humankind from polytheistic paganism through Judaism to Christianity, thanks to the perfect nourishment that is the Holy Spirit.

170 Gregory mentions the Jewish veil in a comparable context, in *Antirr* GNO III.I. 221,3–5: Christ the Anointed One is anointed by the Father with the Holy Spirit, to which all assent “whose heart has not been covered with the veil of the Jews” (ὃ γε μὴ κεκαλυμμένος τὴν καρδίαν τῷ Ἰουδαϊκῷ προκαλύμματι, *Antirr* GNO III.I. 221,4–5). MARGARET M. MITCHELL, *Paul, the Corinthians and the Birth of Christian Hermeneutics*, Cambridge 2010, has demonstrated, for instance in her chapter *The mirror and the veil: hermeneutics of occlusion* (pp. 58–78), how, among others, Gregory of Nyssa (see his prologue to *Cant*) uses Paul's hermeneutics as it is found in the epistles to the Corinthians.

Whenever Gregory speaks of the impossibility of separating the Spirit and the Son from the Father, he points to the exclusive worship of the Father as the (deficient) worship that the Jews offer:

But as for you, although you are convinced that the Holy Spirit is the giver of so many marvelous gifts, why is it that you look down upon asking and take refuge in the law which commands that we worship the Lord God and adore him alone? Tell me, then, how will you adore him alone if you sever him from his connection with the Only-Begotten and his own Spirit? Truly, this is a Jewish kind of worship.

Maced GNO III.I. 110,17–23

Gregory returns to this later and, rather curiously, after the Jews adds the Sadducees, the proponents of Hellenisation in resistance to the Pharisees:

And yet, it is unnatural for the one who conceives of ‘Father’ not to conceive also of the Son and for one who has grasped ‘Son’ in his mind not also to receive the Spirit together with the Son. Now if he completely denies and rejects the confession, he is one of the Jews or the Sadducees, both denying the Son and not admitting the Holy Spirit.

Maced GNO III.I. 113,27–114,1

Here in *Maced*, Gregory alleges against the Pneumatomachi that their doctrines reflect the Jewish view. Following Athanasius’s arguments against Arius, who regarded the Son as a creature, Gregory makes similar accusations in his *Eun* against Eunomius, whom Gregory accuses of basing his doctrine of the Trinity on a Jewish exegesis of Scripture. In *Eun* I GNO I. 79,21–27, Gregory contends that, because Eunomius and his allies separate the Son and the Spirit from the essence of the Father, they should leave the Christian Church and return to the synagogues of the Jews (οὐκοῦν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐπὶ τὰς συναγωγὰς τῶν Ἰουδαίων παλινδρομεῖτωσαν, *Eun* I GNO I. 79,24–25).¹⁷¹ It is essential for Gregory that the God of the Christians is Father, Son, and Spirit from eternity. All three divine persons are implicated in the forgiveness of sins, and not just the Father, as the Jews say, Gregory argues at the end of Oratio III of *Or dom* (sc 426,6–428,4; GNO VII.II. 43,16–44,7):

What, then, is the insanity of the Pneumatomachians (πνευματομαχοῦντων) who decree that the Lord is enslaved? To them not even Paul’s testi-

¹⁷¹ The *Lexicon Gregorianum* x, col. 191c–193b and 194c–196a provides further *loci*.

mony is worthy of belief; he says, “The Lord is the Spirit.” ... Or maybe they count the removal of sins as a mark of inferiority in dignity? Well then, listen to the unbelieving Jews: when they cried out that to forgive sins belongs to God alone, and said, alluding to the Father: “Why is this man speaking blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mk 2:7; Lk 5:21) If, then, the Father forgives sins, and the Son takes away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29; cf. 1Jn 3:5), and the Holy Spirit purifies those in whom he comes to reside from the defilements of sin, what will those who fight against their own life say?¹⁷²

Simply professing the name of Christ, as the Manichaeans do, does not make them Christians, because they do not share the belief in Christ as one of the divine persons, and do not acknowledge that Christ shares in the goodness of the Father. In *Eun* III GNO II. 265,18–22, Eunomius is accused of attributing the good only to the Father, and thus of revealing himself as a Manichaean:

If on the other hand he (sc. Eunomius) supposes that what ‘good’ means belongs solely to God the Father, then he is to be shunned for his wickedness, since he is restarting the disease of the Manichees in his own doctrines.¹⁷³

For Gregory, Manichaeism is a form of impiety.¹⁷⁴ In his *Epist can* GNO III.V. 4,7–9, Gregory aligns Manichaeism with Judaism, idolatry, and every other

172 *Or dom* III (I follow the text of GNO VII.II. 43,16–18): Τίς οὖν ἡ μανία τῶν πνευματομαχοῦντων, δουλεύειν τὸν κύριον δογματιζόντων; οἷς οὐδὲ Παῦλος διαμαρτυρόμενός ἐστιν ἀξίόπιστος, ὅς φησιν, ‘Ὁ δὲ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστίν. *Or dom* III (I follow the text of GNO VII.II. 43,23–44,7): ἢ τὸ καθαίρειν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν σημεῖον ποιοῦνται τῆς κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ὑφέσεως; καὶ μὴν ἄκουε τῶν ἀπίστων Ἰουδαίων βοώντων ὅτι τὸ ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας μόνου ἐστὶ τοῦ θεοῦ, περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς λέγοντες, Τί οὗτος λαλεῖ βλασφημίαν; τίς δύναται ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας εἰ μὴ ὁ μόνος ὁ θεός; εἰ οὖν ἀφήσῃ μὲν ἁμαρτίας ὁ πατήρ, αἴρει δὲ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ κόσμου τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, καθαρίζει δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐκ τῶν τῆς ἁμαρτίας μολυσμάτων οἷς ἂν ἐγγένηται, τί ἐροῦσιν οἱ τῇ ἰδίᾳ προσπολεμοῦντες ζωῇ; (transl. by ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ).

173 *Eun* III GNO II. 265,18–22: εἰ δὲ τὸ νόημα τὸ διὰ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ σημαίνόμενον μόνῳ προσήκειν οἶεται τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὶ, βδελυκτὸς ἂν εἴη τῆς ἀσεβείας, τῶν Μανιχαίων τὴν νόσον ἐπὶ τῶν ἰδίων δογμάτων ἀνανεούμενος (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

174 CAROLINE HUMFRESS, *Orthodoxy and the Courts in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 2007, in her chapter *Heresy and the Courts*, pp. 244–252, has shown how church and state became mutually intertwined in their common campaign against the heretics, among whom the Manichaeans featured prominently. Joining Mani’s sect resulted in a charge of impiety, which threatened the coherence of the state as well as the church.

form of impiety. The common feature is their unbelief in Christ, with whom the Spirit of God is inseparably connected.

In Gregory's polemic with the enemies of the Spirit, the Jews and the Manichaeans function as deterrent groups that do not recognise the Son and the Spirit as belonging to the One God. By introducing these groups of non-Christians who are seemingly closely aligned with Christians, Gregory strengthens his readers'/hearers' sense of identity. Only belief in God, Father and Son and Spirit makes a true Christian of someone, a Christian who refuses to be equated with the Jews or the Manichaeans.

What does confessing Christ involve?

Gregory concludes the beginning of his third response with a proposition which he subsequently develops in the following passages. Confessing the Son as Christ, i.e. as the Anointed One, presupposes that the person who makes this confession recognises the inseparable connection between the Anointed One and the anointing oil, i.e. between Christ and the Spirit. In this manner Gregory establishes an inseparable relationship between Christ and the Spirit: if the Anointed One, then anointing; just like: if Father, then Son.¹⁷⁵ There is a natural transition towards the coming reflection: from the human beings who call themselves Christians after Christ, to the name giver's name: Christ, i.e. the Anointed One. Gregory's starting point is Acts 10:38. In *Antirrh*, too, Gregory discusses this Scriptural passage. In the run-up to it, Gregory asks everyone who is not covered inwardly by the Jewish veil to assent to the proposition that Christ was never without anointing, that the Father is the anointer, and that the Spirit is the anointing:

he who had never been unanointed must necessarily always be the Christ. Everyone must believe (or, at any rate, everyone whose heart has not been covered with the veil of the Jews) that it is the Father who anoints and the Holy Spirit who is the anointing.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 260: "The logical sequence of the text indicates that Gregory intends to present the name and the definition of Christ as relative to the Holy Spirit. To think of Christ necessarily entails thinking of the Holy Spirit, just as thinking of the Father leads one to think of the Son."

¹⁷⁶ *Antirrh* GNO III.1. 221,2–5: ὁ δὲ μηδέποτε ἄχριστος, αἰεὶ πάντως Χριστός· ὅτι τοίνυν ὁ χρίων ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ, τὸ δὲ χρίσμα τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμά ἐστι, πᾶς τις ἂν σύνθοιτο ὃ γε μὴ κεκαλυμμένος τὴν καρδίαν τῷ Ἰουδαϊκῷ προκαλύμματι (transl. by ROBIN ORTON).

Quoting Jn 17:5, Gregory then equates the Spirit with the glory with which the Son has been anointed before all ages:

‘Glorify me’, he says (it is as if he said ‘anoint me’), ‘with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.’ But that glory that is posited here, existing before the world, before all creation, before all the ages, that glory in which the Only-Begotten God is glorified, is, in our opinion, no other than the glory of the Spirit. For orthodox doctrine teaches that the Holy Trinity alone exists before the ages. ‘He who existed before the ages’ (Ps LXX 55.19) is what prophecy says of the Father. Of the Only-Begotten, the Apostle says, ‘through him the ages came into being’ (cf. Heb 1.2). And the glory attributable to the Only-Begotten God, which is posited to exist before all the ages, is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, what belongs to Christ, who was with the Father before the world came into being, also belongs, at the end of the ages, to him who is united to Christ. Scripture speaks of ‘Jesus of Nazareth’, whom ‘God ... anointed with the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 10.38).¹⁷⁷

Given the continuation of *Maced*, this passage in *Antirr* is important, because it connects anointing and glory, both being the Holy Spirit.

6.2 *The Father Is King, the Son, Too, Is King, and the Holy Spirit Is the Kingship in which the Son Is Anointed (GNO III.I. 102,17–103,13)*

6.2.1 Greek Text

(102,17) Εἰπάτωσαν οὖν ἡμῖν οἱ καθαιροῦντες τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος δόξαν καὶ τῇ ὑποχειρίῳ φύσει συγκατατάσσοντες, τίνος σύμβολόν ἐστιν ἡ χρίσις. οὐχὶ τῆς βασιλείας; τί δαί; (102,20) οὐχὶ φύσει βασιλέα τὸν μονογενῆ πεπιστεύκασιν; οὐκ ἀντεροῦσι πάντως οἱ γε μὴ καθάπαξ τῷ Ἰουδαϊκῷ καλύμματι τὴν καρδίαν περιεχόμενοι. εἰ οὖν τῇ φύσει βασιλεὺς ὁ υἱός, βασιλείας δὲ σύμβολόν ἐστι τὸ χρίσμα, τί σοι διὰ τῆς ἀκολουθίας ὁ

177 *Antirr* GNO III.I. 222,9–23: Δόξασόν με γάρ, φησίν, ὡσανεὶ χρίσον ἔλεγε, τῇ δόξῃ, ἣν εἶχον παρὰ σοὶ πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι. ἡ δὲ προκόσμιος καὶ πρὸ πάσης κτίσεως καὶ πρὸ πάντων αἰώνων θεωρουμένη δόξα, ἥ ὁ μονογενὴς θεὸς ἐνδοξάζεται, οὐκ ἂν ἄλλη τις εἴη κατὰ τὸν ἡμέτερον λόγον παρὰ τὴν δόξαν τοῦ πνεύματος· μόνην γὰρ προαιώνιον τὴν ἁγίαν τριάδα ὁ τῆς εὐσεβείας παραδίδωσι λόγος. Ὁ ὑπάρχων πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, φησὶ περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡ προφητεία· περὶ δὲ τοῦ μονογενοῦς ὁ ἀπόστολος ὅτι Δι’ αὐτοῦ οἱ αἰῶνες ἐγένοντο· καὶ δόξα πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων περὶ τὸν μονογενῆ θεὸν θεωρουμένη τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι τὸ ἅγιον. ὅπερ οὖν ἦν τῷ Χριστῷ τῷ παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ ὄντι πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι, τοῦτο καὶ τῷ ἐνωθέντι πρὸς τὸν Χριστὸν ἐπὶ τέλει τῶν αἰώνων γίνεται. Ἰησοῦν γάρ, φησὶ, τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ, ὃν ἔχρισεν ὁ θεὸς τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ (transl. by ROBIN ORTON).

λόγος ἐνδείκνυται; ὅτι οὐκ ἀλλότριόν τί ἐστι (102,25) τοῦ κατὰ φύσιν βασιλέως τὸ χρίσμα οὐδὲ ὡς ξένον τι καὶ ἀλλόφυλον τῇ ἀγίᾳ τριάδι τὸ πνεῦμα συντέτακται. βασιλεὺς μὲν γὰρ ὁ υἱός· βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ἢ χρισθεὶς ὁ μονογενὴς Χριστὸς ἐστὶ καὶ βασιλεὺς τῶν ὄντων. εἰ οὖν βασιλεὺς ὁ πατήρ, (102,30) βασιλεὺς δὲ ὁ μονογενής, βασιλεία δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, εἰς πάντως τῆς βασιλείας ἐπὶ τῆς τριάδος ὁ λόγος. ἡ δὲ τῆς κρίσεως ἔννοια τὸ μηδὲν εἶναι διάστημα μεταξὺ τοῦ υἱοῦ (103,1) καὶ τοῦ ἀγίου πνεύματος δι' ἀπορρήτων αἰνίσσεται· ὡς γὰρ μεταξὺ τῆς τοῦ σώματος ἐπιφανείας καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἐλαίου κρίσεως οὐδὲν ἐπινοεῖ μέσον οὔτε ὁ λόγος οὔτε ἡ αἴσθησις, οὕτως ἀδιάστατός ἐστι πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τῷ υἱῷ ἡ (103,5) συνάφεια, ὥστε τῷ μέλλοντι αὐτοῦ διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἄπτεσθαι ἀναγκαῖον εἶναι προεντυγχάνειν διὰ τῆς ἀφῆς τῷ μύρῳ· οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶ τι μέρος ὃ γυμνὸν ἐστὶ τοῦ ἀγίου πνεύματος. διὰ τοῦτο ἡ ὁμολογία τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ κυριότητος ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ τοῖς καταλαμβάνουσι γίνεται πάντοθεν τοῖς διὰ πίστεως (103,10) προσεγγίζουσι προαπαντῶντος¹⁷⁸ τοῦ πνεύματος. εἰ οὖν τῇ φύσει βασιλεὺς ὁ υἱός, ἀξίωμα δὲ βασιλείας τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ᾧ υἱὸς χρίεται, τίς ἐπινοεῖται τῆς βασιλείας ἡ κατὰ τὴν φύσιν πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἄλλοτρισις;

6.2.2 Translation

(102,17) Well then, those who would destroy the Spirit's glory and rank him down with the subordinate nature must tell us what the anointing symbolizes. Is it not kingship? Well? Do they not believe that the Only-Begotten is king by nature? They won't deny it unless they have covered their heart once for all with the Jewish veil. (cf. 2 Cor 3:13–15) So, if the Son is king by nature, and anointing is a symbol of kingship, what does the argument indicate to you through this line of reasoning? That the anointing isn't something estranged from the one who is king by nature, and that the Spirit isn't ranked with the Holy Trinity as something foreign and alien. The Son is indeed king, and the living, substantial, and subsisting kingship is the Holy Spirit, in which the Only-Begotten Christ, the king of beings, is anointed. So, if the Father is king, the Only-Begotten is king, and the Holy Spirit is the kingship, without doubt a single idea of kingship applies to the Trinity. The notion of anointing intimates through riddles that there is no gap between the Son (103) and the Holy Spirit. For just as neither

¹⁷⁸ I follow the variant by ARG and VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL, who in his German translation of *Maced*, in VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises*, 57, reads προαπαντῶντος instead of the incomprehensible word προαπαντῶντες in the GNO text. The *Lexicon Gregorianum* VIII, col. 670b, s.v. προαπαντῶν, has similarly chosen this variant, as has IGOR POCHOSHAIJEV, *Gregory of Nyssa*, 62. This variant occurs already in the codex Burneianus and in the text published by Angelo Mai and copied by Migne (tomus XLV, col. 1321B) in the *Patrologia Graeca*, a circumstance the text editor of GNO III.1, Fridericus Mueller, failed to mention.

reason nor sense perception can conceive of anything intervening between the body's surface and the oil's anointing, so too is the Son's connection to the Holy Spirit seamless. Accordingly, the one who would touch him by faith must first have contact with the ointment, since there is not any part of him devoid of the Holy Spirit. This is why the confession of the Son's lordship arises in those who grasp him in the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 12:3), because in every case the Spirit first encounters those who approach through faith. So then, if the Son is king by nature, and the dignity of kingship is the Holy Spirit, in which the Son is anointed, who could imagine that the kingship varies in its own nature with respect to itself?

6.2.3 Paraphrase

The Spirit does not belong to the nature of those who are subordinate, but is the kingship personified, the anointing oil with which the Son is anointed king, so that there is no distance at all between the Son and the Spirit, inseparably linked with the Father as king in the divine Trinity.

6.2.4 Sub-questions

In what context does Gregory raise the subject of the Spirit's kingship?

The context in which Gregory addresses the kingship of the Spirit is his description of the Spirit as the distributor of the divine glory in which the Spirit himself fully shares.

In the first part of his third response Gregory has drawn a clear line. If human beings are to share in the divine glory in which the Spirit lives and of which he gives to human beings, they must confess the Spirit as sharing in the fullness of divine glory. In order to be able to demonstrate that the Spirit distributes to human beings what he possesses by nature, Gregory proclaims the Father and the Son as king, and the Spirit as the kingship, precisely over creation, including the human beings who are subject to this kingship of the divine Trinity. By insisting that the Spirit shares in the fullness of the kingship of the Father and the Son, Gregory is subsequently able to place the Spirit on the side of uncreated reality, and proclaim him the distributor of the divine gifts to the subordinates of God: a king is not without subjects. To be able to portray the Spirit as sharing in the kingship of God, Gregory begins by quoting a Scriptural passage, of the words of Peter in Cornelius's house (Acts 10:38) about Jesus of Nazareth as the one anointed by God in the Holy Spirit. The association between the anointed one and the anointing in this Scriptural passage offers Gregory the opportunity to demonstrate the inseparable bond between the Spirit and Christ, as well as, by connecting the anointing by the Holy Spirit with the kingship of Christ, the full participation of the Spirit in the divine

kingship. But not only that: Gregory ensures that speaking about Christ immediately presupposes the Spirit, like speaking about the Father implies the Son: this is a shift from God's economy to God's immanence, a shift that is required to be able to then call the Spirit the distributor of the divine gifts. The Spirit in this passage is the foundation of the relationship between the Father and the Son.¹⁷⁹

What does Gregory mean by Jewish veil?

Gregory assumes that no one will deny that the Only-Begotten One is king by nature, unless they are entirely covered by the Jewish veil. Gregory refers here to Paul, who tells the Jews in 2 Cor 3:14–18, with an allusion to the veil of Moses in Exodus 34:33–35, that they read the books of the Old Testament with a veiled mind. Only by turning to Christ in the Spirit can this veil be removed. It has been given to the Christians to view the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces.¹⁸⁰

Gregory mentions the Jewish veil in a similar context in *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 221,3–5: Christ the Anointed One is anointed by the Father with the Holy Spirit, acclaimed by all “whose heart has not been covered with the veil of the Jews”. (ὁ γε μὴ κεκαλυμμένος τὴν καρδίαν τῷ Ἰουδαϊκῷ προκαλύμματι, *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 221,4–5).

Paul's text (2 Cor 3:14–18) in which this Jewish veil features concerns God's glory, which is the Spirit, and the transformation of human beings which leads to them sharing in God's glory:

ἄχρι γὰρ τῆς σήμερον ἡμέρας τὸ αὐτὸ κάλυμμα ἐπὶ τῇ ἀναγνώσει τῆς παλαιᾶς διαθήκης μένει, μὴ ἀνακαλυπτόμενον ὅτι ἐν Χριστῷ καταργεῖται· ἀλλ' ἔως σήμερον ἡνίκα ἂν ἀναγινώσκῃται Μωϋσῆς, κάλυμμα ἐπὶ τὴν καρδίαν αὐτῶν κείται· ἡνίκα δὲ ἐὰν ἐπιστρέψῃ πρὸς κύριον, περιαιρεῖται τὸ κάλυμμα. ὁ δὲ

179 GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 261: “From a systematic perspective, the shift that Gregory makes here is particularly noticeable, since, up to this point he had followed a linear schema, which tied the Spirit to the Father through the Son, and the third Person is now inserted into the relationship between the first two, as a foundation of it. The Son is king as the Father is, precisely because He receives the Chrism, the Holy Spirit himself.” LEWIS AYRES, *Innovation and Ressourcement*, 202, has pointed to shifts that occur in Gregory's work from the role of the Spirit in the *oikonomia* to the role of the Spirit in the *theologia*. This gives rise to an embryonic theology of the nature of the Spirit *per se*. In his notes 50, 55, 56, 57, Ayres refers to *loci* in *Maced*, but mistakenly calls them *loci* in *Simpl*.

180 MARGARET M. MITCHELL, *Paul, the Corinthians*, has demonstrated, for instance in her chapter *The mirror and the veil: hermeneutics of occlusion* (pp. 58–78), how, among others, Gregory of Nyssa (see his prologue to *Cant*) uses Paul's hermeneutics as it is found in the epistles to the Corinthians.

κύριος τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν· οὐ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα κυρίου, ἐλευθερία. ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντες ἀνα-
κεκαλυμμένῳ προσώπῳ τὴν δόξαν κυρίου κατοπτριζόμενοι τὴν αὐτὴν εἰκόνα
μεταμορφούμεθα ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν καθάπερ ἀπὸ κυρίου πνεύματος.¹⁸¹

Elsewhere in Gregory's writings, it is precisely this last sentence about glory that is quoted in relation to the baptismal liturgy and the anointing that is part of it.¹⁸²

Does Gregory explain the connection between anointing and kingship?

Inspired by Acts 10:38, Gregory assumes in *Maced* that the connection between anointing and kingship is self-evident. Gregory assumes that his readers know that anointing is the symbol of kingship. Given the king who is king by nature through the anointing of the Spirit, this means that the Spirit is *the living, substantial and personified kingship*.

Gregory explained the connection between anointing and kingship shortly before writing *Maced*: at the end of his letter to Eustathius (*Eust* GNO III.I. 15,16–23).¹⁸³ In this letter, Gregory explains this connection between anointing and kingship in the following manner:

Our God, it says, is *King from everlasting* (Ps LXX 73:12). But the Son, who possesses *all that the Father has* (Jn 16:15) is himself proclaimed king by Holy Scripture (cf. Jn 18:36). Now the divine Scripture says that the Holy Spirit is the anointing (χρῖσμα) of the Only-Begotten (cf. Acts 10:38, Lk 4:18), intimating the dignity of the Spirit by a metaphor from the terms

181 JAMES D.G. DUNN, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, Grand Rapids Michigan, 1998, 421–422: “Almost certainly, ‘the Lord’ is not Christ here, but the ‘Lord’ of the text just adapted. In other words, Paul was thinking here of conversion to the Spirit.”

182 MARGUERITE HARL, «From Glory to Glory»—L’interprétation de 11Cor. 3,18b par Grégoire de Nysse et la liturgie baptismale, in: P. GRANFIELD & J.A. JUNGSMANN (ed.), *Kyriakon. Festschrift Johannes Quasten*, vol. II, Münster 1970, 730–735, gives the *loci* of 2 Cor 3:18 in Gregory’s writings, describes Gregory’s double explanation of ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν (theologically: the transition of human beings to the glory of God, i.e. participation in God’s glory; spiritually: the growth towards ever greater glory), and demonstrates that Gregory’s use of Paul’s passage is rooted in the liturgy of baptism.

183 See p. 62 note 8 for the dating of this letter. JEAN DANIELOU, Chrismation prébaptismale et divinité de l’Esprit chez Grégoire de Nysse, in: *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 56 (1968) 177–198, pp. 180–181, thinks that Gregory felt obliged in *Eust* to explain the connection between the anointing and kingship, because the anointing of Christ was often linked to the anointing of priests in the Old Testament. There is no indication in *Perf* GNO VIII.I. 176,17–177,7 that Gregory believed that the link he draws between the name of Christ and the royal anointing was an atypical interpretation.

commonly used here below. For in ancient times, the symbol of this dignity for those who were being advanced to kingship was the anointing bestowed on them.¹⁸⁴

The metaphors used within the human community, in this case that of the anointing oil which indicates the dignity of kingship, can thus help to clarify the divine life of the three divine persons: Scripture uses the metaphor of king, anointing, and kingship, and thus sheds light on the mutual and eternal relationship between Father, Son, and Spirit.

How does Gregory connect the kingship of Christ and the anointing of the Holy Spirit with each other?

Gregory takes the kingship of the Son as his starting point, but significantly adds that he is king by nature (φύσει):

Do they not believe that the Only-Begotten is king by nature? They won't deny it unless they have covered their heart once for all with the Jewish veil (cf. 2 Cor 3:15).

Maced GNO III.I. 102,20–22

This addition *by nature* (φύσει) does not yet appear in the letter to Eustathius that was written shortly before *Maced*. In this part of *Maced* GNO III.I. 102,17–103,13, it occurs as many as five times.¹⁸⁵

What is the eternal kingship that the Son possesses by nature founded upon? On the fact that the Son has been anointed with anointing oil, the symbol of kingship, and is therefore called the Christ, i.e. the Anointed One. Gregory

184 *Eust* GNO III.I. 15,16–23: 'Ο δὲ θεὸς ἡμῶν, φησί, βασιλεὺς προαιώνιος. ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ βασιλέως ὁ υἱὸς ὁ πάντα (τὰ) τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχων καὶ αὐτὸς βασιλεὺς παρὰ τῆς ἀγίας γραφῆς ἀνακηρύττεται, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον χρίσμα τοῦ μονογενοῦς εἶναι φησιν ἢ θεία γραφή ἐκ μεταφορᾶς τῶν τῇδε νενομισμένων τὴν ἀξίαν τοῦ πνεύματος ἐρμηνεύουσα. ὡς γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις τοῖς εἰς βασιλείαν παραγομένοις σύμβολον ἦν τῆς ἀξίας ταύτης τὸ ἐπαγόμενον αὐτοῖς χρίσμα (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

185 *Maced* GNO III.I. 102,20; 102,22; 102,25; 103,11 and 103,13. CONSTANTINE BOZINIS, *Dogmatics and Politics in Gregory of Nyssa: Monarchy, Democracy, Kingship, Tyranny & Anarchy in the Against Eunomius*, in: MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium 1—An English Translation with Supporting Studies* (VCS 148), Leiden 2018, 270–294, has demonstrated the importance in Gregory's works, especially *Eun*, of the rhetorical and philosophical background of the concepts of king and kingship, in this case for the Son and the Spirit respectively, in mirrors for princes and political treatises from Antiquity.

admittedly distinguishes between the eternal anointing within God's immanence and the anointing of Jesus by the Holy Spirit during his earthly existence, but he does not separate these two anointings: he possesses a double kingship. See *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 220,2–223,10. With a reference to Ps LXX 44:8 Gregory writes there:

The 'oil of gladness' represents the power of the Holy Spirit, by whom God is anointed by God, that is, the Only-Begotten by the Father.¹⁸⁶

In the continuation of *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 222,9–23, Gregory points to the anointing during Jesus' human life:

Scripture speaks of 'Jesus of Nazareth', whom 'God ... anointed with the Holy Spirit'.¹⁸⁷

The same Christ is called the eternally Anointed One a few lines before in the text:

he who had never been unanointed must necessarily always be the Christ. Everyone must believe (or, at any rate, everyone whose heart has not been

186 *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 220,23–26: τὸ δὲ τῆς ἀγαλλιᾶσεως ἔλαιον τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος παρίστησι δύναμιν, ᾧ χριέται παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ θεός, τουτέστι παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ μονογενής (transl. by ROBIN ORTON). ELISABETH GRÜNBECK, *Christologische Schriftargumentation und Bildersprache. Zum Konflikt zwischen Metapherninterpretation und Dogmatischen Schriftbeweistraditionen in der Patristischen Auslegung des 44. (45.) Psalms* (VCS 26), Leiden 1994, 221–224 (*Gesalbter von Ewigkeit—Gregor von Nyssa gegen Apollinaris*), discusses this locus from *Antirrh*: Gregory uses the prophecy in Ps LXX 44:7–8 as testimony that the name of Christ is eternal. On p. 223: "Im Hintergrund steht eine Theorie von den Namen Gottes: Die 'gottwürdigen' Namen erfassen nur Teilaspekte des unendlichen Gottes, müssen ihm aber von Ewigkeit zugeschrieben werden, wenn sie denn zum unendlichen Gott gehören. Im Titel des 'Gesalbten' wird Jesus als Gott geoffenbart, als fleischgewordene Macht und Weisheit und Gerechtigkeit, also kann auch dieser Name nur ewig gedacht werden. Gregor vertieft die antiarianischen Argumentation, wie sie von Athanasius grundgelegt wurde: Nicht nur ist Gott aus Liebe zur Gerechtigkeit Mensch geworden und durch die Taufe gesalbt; sondern weil er immer die Gerechtigkeit liebte, ist er immer vom Vater mit dem Hl. Geist gesalbt. Die Salbung mit Hl. Geist bei der Taufe macht dieses Verhältnis öffentlich, bewirkt aber für den Menschen Jesus Christus selbst nichts Neues. 'Gesalbt', d.h. mit Gott geeint wurde er durch die Inkarnation als solche ... Im Namen 'Gesalbter' verdichtet sich die Proprietät des Sohnes in der innertrinitarischen Relation und in seiner ökonomischen Funktion."

187 *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 222,22–23: Ἰησοῦν γάρ, φησί, τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ, ὃν ἔχρισεν ὁ θεός τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ (transl. by ROBIN ORTON).

covered with the veil of the Jews) that it is the Father who anoints and the Holy Spirit who is the anointing.¹⁸⁸

In *Eust* GNO III.I. 16,3–7, Gregory declares that the connection between the anointing and the kingship is fundamental to the relationship between the Son and the Spirit:

For this reason, in order that the dignity of the Holy Spirit might be more clearly manifest to human beings, he was named by the Scripture as the symbol of kingship, that is *anointing*, from which we are taught that the Holy Spirit shares in the glory and the kingship of the Only-Begotten Son of God.¹⁸⁹

It is important for the continuation of *Maced* to be alert to the identification between glory (δόξα) and kingship (βασιλεία). Further on in *Maced*, the Holy Spirit is called not only kingship, but also glory.

What image does Gregory use to portray the inseparability of the Son and the Spirit?

By calling the Holy Spirit the anointing with oil with which the Son is anointed, Gregory expressively portrays the inseparable connection between the Son and the Spirit, between whom there is no distance:

The notion (ἔννοια) of anointing intimates through riddles (δι' ἀπορρήτων αἰνίσσεται) that there is no gap between the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Maced GNO III.I. 102,31–103,1

The combination of ἔννοια, δι' ἀπορρήτων and αἰνίσσεται does show that Gregory is aware that he is operating here at the very limit: Gregory has reached the farthest reaches of his linguistic ability in relation to the mysteries of God. This is why he resorts to metaphor, but he does this in a very specific manner. Not only does he compare the mysterious connection between the Son and the

188 *Antirr* GNO III.I. 221,2–5: ὁ δὲ μηδέποτε ἄχριστος, αἰεὶ πάντως Χριστός· ὅτι τοίνυν ὁ χρίων ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ, τὸ δὲ χρίσμα τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμά ἐστι, πᾶς τις ἂν σύνθοιτο ὃ γε μὴ κεκαλυμμένος τὴν καρδίαν τῷ Ἰουδαϊκῷ προκαλύμματι (transl. by ROBIN ORTON).

189 *Eust* GNO III.I. 16,3–7: διὰ τοῦτο, ὡς ἂν μάλιστα ἡ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἀξία τοῖς ἀνθρώποις παραδειχθεῖ, σύμβολον βασιλείας καὶ χρίσμα παρὰ τῆς γραφῆς ὠνομάσθη, διδασκομένων ἡμῶν ὅτι τῆς τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ δόξης καὶ βασιλείας κοινωνεῖ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

Spirit, between whom there is no distance, to anointing oil on the body of the anointed one. But he also blends the image and the imagined into each other by placing the human sense of touch within the context of faith in the Son: human beings who desire to touch the Son in faith (the imagined), with their sense of touch (the blending of the two into each other) first encounter the anointing oil (the image):

Accordingly, the one who would touch him (sc. the Son) by faith must first have contact with the ointment.

Maced GNO III.I. 103,5–6

Gregory continues to blend the imagined and the image into each other when he adds that no part of the Son is denuded of the Spirit. This makes it possible for Gregory to conclude with the observation that those who turn to the Son in the faith will first encounter the Spirit on their way.

Gregory concludes his work *Eust* with a similar argument, in which he speaks also of the transference of descriptions (ἐκ μεταφορᾶς τῶν τῇδε νομισμένων, *Eust* GNO III.I. 15,20–21; ἐκ μεταφορᾶς τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν ὀνομάτων, *Eust* GNO III.I. 16,9–10). Just as in the case of human beings the anointing oil comes first and then the kingship, so it is for the Son, whose kingship cannot be understood separately from the dignity of the Spirit. The name of the Anointed One, which is rightly given, is proof of the inseparable connection between the Anointed One and the Holy Spirit, a connection within which there is no distance (τῆς ἀχωρίστου καὶ ἀδιαστάτου πρὸς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα συναφείας, *Eust* GNO III.I. 16,12–13). The Holy Spirit shares in the royal dignity, because as oil the Spirit himself is a sign of the royal supremacy of the Only-Begotten One who is the Anointed One.

In *RefEun*, which was written after *Maced*, in the second half of 383, Gregory demonstrates the intimate bond that exists between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, who is the Spirit of the Son. Because the Son is always viewed in the Father, the Spirit is also viewed eternally with the Father. In his introduction to these reflections, Gregory speaks of the inseparable bond between the Son and the Spirit, the Anointed One and the anointing respectively:

just as it is impossible to think of any distinction between the Anointed One (Χριστοῦ) and the anointing (χρίσμα), between the king and the kingship, the wisdom and the Spirit of wisdom, the truth and the Spirit of truth, or between the power and the Spirit of the power.¹⁹⁰

190 *RefEun* GNO II. 317,7–12: ὥς μηδὲν τι μεταξὺ διάλειμμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὸ χρίσμα νοεῖν ἢ τοῦ

In his work *Inscr* (later 370s), Gregory does not associate anointing with kingship, but he does explain that the mystery of the Trinity is enclosed in the name of Christ = the Anointed One. The arrow of Is 49:2 is the living word of God, viz. Christ (*Inscr* GNO V. 119,15–24):¹⁹¹

We will give attention to the prophecy of Isaiah, who says in the person of the Lord, ‘he has made me as a chosen arrow, and in his quiver he has exalted me.’ This arrow, then, is the living Word of God, and is ‘more piercing than any two-edged sword’ (Heb 4:12). Now Christ is the Word, and the mystery of the Trinity is confessed by this name. This word teaches us about the one who anoints, the one who was anointed, and with what he was anointed. For if any one of these should be omitted, the name Christ has no substance.¹⁹²

In the preceding section of *Maced*, Gregory repeats this position when he concludes the beginning of his third response with the following statement:

After all, how will one confess Christ if he does not understand the anointing together with him who is anointed? It says, ‘this one God anointed in the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 10:38).

Maced GNO III.I. 102,14–16

What does Gregory mean by the kingship of the Spirit?

Because the Spirit is the anointing oil with which the Only-Begotten One has been anointed, and because the anointing oil constitutes the dignity of kingship, Gregory calls the Spirit the personification of the kingship, the *living, sub-*

βασιλείως πρὸς τὴν βασιλείαν ἢ τῆς σοφίας πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς σοφίας ἢ τῆς ἀληθείας πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας ἢ τῆς δυνάμεως πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς δυνάμεως.

191 BERNARD POTTIER, *Dieu et le Christ*, 335, has pointed to *Adversus Haereses* by Irenaeus as a source of inspiration (III. 18,3), as this text (at least in the Latin translation that was handed down) says: “In Christi enim nomine subauditur qui unxit, et ipse qui unctus est, et ipsa unctio in qua unctus est. Et unxit quidem Pater, unctus est vero Filius, in Spiritu qui unctio est; quemadmodum per Isaiam ait sermo: ‘Spiritus Dei super me, propter quod unxit me’; significans et unguentem Patrem, et unctum Filium, et unctionem, qui est Spiritus.”

192 *Inscr* GNO V. 119,15–24: τῇ προφητείᾳ τοῦ Ἡσαΐου προσέξομεν, ὃς φησιν ἐκ προσώπου κυρίου ὅτι Ἐθῆκέν με ὡς βέλος ἐκλεκτὸν καὶ ἐν τῇ φαρέτρᾳ αὐτοῦ ὑψώσέν με. τοῦτο τοῖνυν τὸ βέλος ὁ ζῶν τοῦ θεοῦ λόγος ἐστὶ καὶ Τομώτερος ὑπὲρ πάσαν μάχαιραν δίστομον· ὁ δὲ λόγος ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστός· τῷ δὲ ὀνόματι τούτῳ τὸ τῆς τριάδος ὁμολογεῖται μυστήριον. ἐν ᾧ καὶ τὸν χρίσαντα καὶ τὸν χρισθέντα καὶ τὸ ᾧ ἐχρίσθη διδασκόμεθα. εἰ γὰρ ἐν τι τούτων λείποι, τὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ὄνομα οὐχ ὑφίσταται (transl. by RONALD E. HEINE).

stantial, and personified kingship (βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, *Maced GNO III.I. 102,27–28*). Anointed with this kingship, the Only-Begotten One is the Anointed One and is king of all that is. Gregory identifies this personified kingship with the anointing oil with which the Only-Begotten One has been anointed.¹⁹³

At the end of the work *Eust GNO III.I. 15,21–16,21* just mentioned, Gregory concludes the following of the divine dignity of the Spirit: the Spirit, as the anointing oil of the Only-Begotten One, shares in the royal dignity of the Only-Begotten God (ὁ μονογενὴς θεός, *Eust GNO III.I. 16,14*). This clearly demonstrates that the Spirit shares in the divine dignity:

If they say, therefore, that the name of deity refers to dignity, and the Holy Spirit is shown to share in this quality, it follows that he who shares in the dignity will certainly also share in the name which represents it.¹⁹⁴

In *Or dom III*, which, given the arguments it contains against the Pneumatomachi was probably written around the time of the Council of Constantinople in 381,¹⁹⁵ Gregory quotes a striking variant of the Lord's Prayer as Luke has it (Lk 11:2), a variant that can also be found in a text by Marcion, who, like Gregory, was from Pontus.¹⁹⁶ Instead of "Your Kingship come", Gregory reads this pas-

193 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrinal Works. A Literary Study*, Oxford 2018, 75, mistakenly regards the Spirit as the anointing and as kingship as "evidence for the constitutive ambiguity of Gregory's Trinitarian thought", because "Kingship is not one individual hypostasis alongside the King". It is not without reason that Gregory speaks of the Spirit as kingship *personified*: βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος (*Maced GNO III.I. 102,27–28*).

194 *Eust GNO III.I. 16,18–21*: εἰ οὖν φασὶ τινες τὸ τῆς θεότητος ὄνομα τοῦ ἀξιώματος εἶναι δηλωτικόν, ἀπεφάνθη δὲ κοινωνεῖν ἐν τούτῳ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ἅρα τὸ κοινωνοῦν τῆς ἀξίας κοινωνήσκει πάντως καὶ τοῦ παραστατικοῦ ταύτης ὀνόματος (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

195 MONIQUE ALEXANDRE, La variante de Lc 11,2 dans la troisième *Homélie sur l'Oraison Dominicale* de Grégoire de Nysse et la controverse avec les Pneumatomaques, in: MATTHIEU CASSIN & HÉLÈNE GRELLIER (ed.), *Grégoire de Nysse: La Bible dans la construction de son discours. Actes du Colloque de Paris, 9–10 février 2007*, Paris 2008, 163–189, p. 181. EKA-TERINA KIRIA, OR DOM. De Oratione Dominica, in: *BDGN* (2010) 550–553, p. 551.

196 At least this is what can be inferred from Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem* IV 26,2–4. JEAN DANIELLOU, Chrismation prébaptismale, 183, points to Marcion's and Gregory's common background: they were both from the area of Pontus. Daniélou hypothesises that Luke's variant was known in Pontus and Cappadocia. KLAUS B. HAACKER, Der Geist und das Reich im Lukanischen Werk. Konkurrenz oder Konvergenz zwischen Pneumatologie und Eschatologie?, in: *New Testament Studies* 59 (2013) 325–345, p. 332, thinks it is imprudent to credit this variant against the majority of the mss.

sage from Luke as: “Your Holy Spirit come upon us and purify us.”¹⁹⁷ Gregory quotes this petition twice in *Or dom* III: SC 416,4–5 and 425,5–6; GNO VII.II. 40,13–14 and 44,7–8.¹⁹⁸

Where Luke mentions the Holy Spirit, Matthew (Mt 6:10) speaks of the kingship. That gives Gregory a scriptural basis for equating the Holy Spirit and the kingship with each other. He uses this equation to combat those (“they who make shameless statements to the detriment of the Spirit”, οἱ θρασυστομοῦντες κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, *Or dom* SC 414,3–4; GNO VII.II. 39,20) who attempt to lower the Spirit to the created reality, which is subordinate to the kingship of God. The Holy Spirit stands outside the created reality and is part of the divine reality, among other things on account of its kingship. In view of this *locus* in *Or dom*, we may assume that Gregory believed there was a scriptural basis for his statement about the personified kingship. Luke’s variant would have been familiar to the inhabitants of Pontus and Cappadocia, but given the fact that Gregory wrote *Maced* for the collective bishops of Asia and the East, he justifies the use of this scriptural variant by building this kingship upon the universally known symbolism of the anointing oil with which the king is anointed.¹⁹⁹

Gregory adds extra force to this equation of the kingship and the Holy Spirit by ascribing the significant attributiva ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος to this kingship. There is a similar juxtaposition of attributiva in *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 35,9–10, ascribed there to the Logos who possesses the full power of creation: everything that exists holds life from his will and power. It is said there of the

197 *Or dom* III (SC 412,16–414,2; GNO VII.II. 39,17–19): οὕτω γὰρ ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ φησὶν, ἀντὶ τοῦ Ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου, Ἐλθέτω τὸ πνεῦμά σου τὸ ἅγιον ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς καὶ καθαρίσαίτω ἡμᾶς.

198 I have translated this as *Your kingship come* rather than the usual *Your kingdom come*, because of the double meaning of βασιλεία (kingship and kingdom). Apparently Gregory uses βασιλεία as kingship in *Or dom* III. PER BESKOW, *Rex Gloriae. The Kingship of Christ in the Early Church*, Uppsala 1962, has described not only the importance of the notion of Christ as king in the fourth century and its roots in earlier centuries (*passim*), but also shows on pp. 286–287 how this double meaning of βασιλεία helped Gregory of Nazianzus and Gregory of Nyssa to appropriately interpret 1 Cor 15:28 and to avoid any possible clash with Lk 1:33: Christ ultimately hands over the kingdom to his Father, while eternally retaining the kingship himself. Beskow does not mention any *locus* for Gregory of Nyssa (although he lists *Tunc et ipse* under the title *Hom. in 1 Cor. 15.28* in the index p. 378, but without indicating any specific passage). In *Tunc et ipse* GNO III.II. 27,19–28,3, Gregory uses βασιλεία in the sense of kingdom. In the continuation, our subjection to the Father, like Christ’s, is called (GNO III.II. 28,8–9) βασιλεία (now in the sense of kingship) καὶ ἀφθαρσία καὶ μακαριότης.

199 JEAN DANIELOU, *Chrismation prébaptismale*, 184.

Logos of God that he is οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος, through whom human beings equally have been led to life. Following the example of the Logos personified, Gregory will have seen an opportunity to declare the Spirit to be the kingship personified.

In equating the Spirit and the kingship, Gregory goes a step further than his brother Basil, who in his *De Spiritu Sancto* xx 51 only went so far as to allow the Spirit a share in the kingship: “if the Spirit is above creation, then he shares in the kingship.”²⁰⁰

Does Gregory mention an anointing with the Holy Spirit that precedes baptism?

At the end of this section of the text, Gregory speaks of the confession of the kingship of the Son which takes place in the Spirit, as a result of the fact that those who come to the Son encounter the Spirit. Perhaps this is a literal reference to the baptismal rites. It is not without reason that this meditation on the kingship of the Spirit as the royal anointing of the Son is followed by the gift of the Spirit in baptism. Was baptism in Gregory’s time preceded by an anointing with the Holy Spirit, perhaps in conjunction with making the profession of faith?

In his sermon *Diem lum*, Gregory alludes on several occasions to the consecration of baptismal water and the blessing of the body of the baptizand. He says that the Spirit blesses the body that is baptised, and consecrates the water that is used for baptism (εὐλογεῖ τὸ σῶμα τὸ βαπτιζόμενον καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ βαπτίζον, *Diem lum* GNO IX. 225,10–11). A few lines earlier he speaks of the coming of the Spirit over the baptismal waters (ἡ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐπιφοίτησις μυστικῶς ἐρχομένη, *Diem lum* GNO IX. 224,19–20).²⁰¹ In an enumeration of things that receive divine power, Gregory also mentions oil that is blessed:

So with the sacramental oil; so with the wine: though before the benediction they are of little value, each of them, after the sanctification bestowed by the Spirit, has its several operation.²⁰²

The question is whether the oil mentioned here was part of the baptismal rites or was just a random addition to a list of material things that are susceptible

200 Basil *De Spiritu Sancto* (xx 51,49–50): εἰ δὲ ὑπὲρ τὴν κτίσιν ἐστί, τῆς βασιλείας ἐστὶ κοινωνόν. MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN, *The Spirit of God*, 191, points to this connection.

201 For an explanation of the significance of ἐπιφοίτησις see p. 201 note 230.

202 *Diem lum* GNO IX. 225,23–25: οὕτως τὸ μυστικὸν ἔλαιον, οὕτως ὁ οἶνος, ὀλίγου τινὸς ἄξια ὄντα πρὸ τῆς εὐλογίας μετὰ τὸν ἀγιασμὸν τὸν παρὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐκάτερον αὐτῶν ἐνεργεῖ διαφόρως (transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

to the divine power.²⁰³ The enumeration of the things that are able to absorb the divine power is not random: the baptismal water is followed by the altar, the bread, the sacramental oil, the wine, and the priest. If we bear in mind that baptism was followed by the Eucharist celebrated at the altar, and that the connection between baptism and the Eucharist was very close, the sacramental oil must almost certainly have been part of the baptismal rites. It is possible to link the liturgical information that Gregory offers and the Syrian liturgy.²⁰⁴ One example are the *Acts of Thomas* (early 3rd century), where a single pre-baptismal anointing immediately precedes the profession of faith followed by baptism. The anointing of the baptizands enabled the latter to make the profession of faith in the Spirit.²⁰⁵ If we assume that the liturgical practice that was customary in Cappadocia was similar to that of nearby Syria, it is probable that the oil mentioned in the enumeration was indeed part of the baptismal rite, in the way in which this oil was used in the Syrian liturgy: preceding baptism. The question then is whether this anointing was performed only on the head of the baptizands, or on their entire body. There is possibly a relation between the anointing of the baptizand with sacramental oil and the name that Gregory gives to the Spirit: kingship (βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος, *Maced* GNO III.1. 102,27–28), and the corresponding explanation of the anointing of the Son with chrism which leaves no part of the Son denuded of the Spirit (*Maced* GNO III.1. 103,7): οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶ τι μέρος δὲ γυμνὸν ἐστὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος.²⁰⁶ It must be borne in mind, however, that in the *Acts of Thomas*,

203 JEAN DANIELLOU, *Chrismation prébaptismale*, 177–198, and EVERETT FERGUSON, *Baptism in the Early Church. History, Theology and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries*, Grand Rapids Michigan 2009, 608, are at odds with each other on this. Daniélou believes the oil mentioned is the oil for the anointing before baptism, whereas Ferguson thinks there is no indication that there was any anointing either before or after baptism. ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Gregory of Nyssa's Pneumatology in Context: The Spirit as Anointing and the History of the Trinitarian Controversies*, in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 19 (2011) 259–285, p. 280 n. 78, shares Ferguson's view. In fact, Radde-Gallwitz goes even further on p. 272: "Indeed, Gregory appears not to associate Christ's anointing with his baptism." The result of this is that in the continuation of his article he does not connect the dignity of the Spirit with the dignity of the baptizand. CHRISTOPHER A. BEELEY, *The Holy Spirit in the Cappadocians: Past and Present*, in: *Modern Theology* 26 (2010) 90–119, p. 107, does accept any prebaptismal anointing: "The Spirit's anointing—both of Christ and of the baptismal candidate before baptism—thus signifies its nature as kingship."

204 JEAN DANIELLOU, *Chrismation prébaptismale*, 177–198, makes this connection.

205 JEAN DANIELLOU, *Chrismation prébaptismale*, 190–191, draws a close connection between a presumed prebaptismal anointing and the profession of faith that precedes baptism. EVERETT FERGUSON, *Baptism*, 605, has rejected this view: "... this doctrinal affirmation need not require a liturgical expression."

206 JEAN DANIELLOU, *Onction et baptême chez Grégoire de Nysse*, in: A.M. TRIACCA & A. PIS-

it is only the head that is anointed. This anointing is followed by the uttering of the profession of faith; we can thus understand the continuation as literally part of the baptismal rites:

Accordingly, the one who would touch him (sc. the Son) by faith must first have contact with the ointment.

Maced GNO III.I. 103,5–6

The uttering of the profession of the faith happens in the Spirit:

This is why the confession of the Son's lordship arises in those who grasp him in the Holy Spirit, because in every case the Spirit first encounters those who approach through faith.

Maced GNO III.I. 103,8–10

Perhaps it was partly the liturgy of his day that inspired Gregory to offer a theological development of the close connection between the coming of the Spirit and the uttering of the profession of faith in Father, Son, and Spirit. At any rate it is clear that for Gregory, expressing faith in the full divinity of the three divine persons is an indispensable step required for baptism.²⁰⁷ The structure of the work reflects the course of the salvation history of the believer.

6.3 *The Spirit Is the Anointing Oil of the Uncreated King and Therefore Belongs to the Uncreated Nature (GNO III.I. 103,14–104,26)*

6.3.1 Greek Text

(103,14) Ἐπειτα καὶ τοῦτο σκοπήσωμεν· ἡ βασιλεία ἐν τῇ (103,15) τῶν ὑποχειρίων ἀρχῇ πάντως γνωρίζεται. τί οὖν τῆς βασιλευούσης φύσεως ἐστὶ τὸ ὑπῆκοον; τοὺς αἰῶνας πάντως καὶ τὰ ἐν τούτοις ὁ λόγος καταλαμβάνει· Ἡ γὰρ βασιλεία σου, φησὶν, βασιλεία πάντων τῶν αἰώνων. αἰῶνας δὲ λέγων πᾶσαν ἐκ τοῦ περιέχοντος τὴν ἐν

TOIA (ed.), *Le Saint-Esprit dans la liturgie. Conférences Saint-Serge XVII^e Semaine d'Études Liturgiques Paris 1–4 Juillet 1969*, Rome 1977, 66, makes this association. The Syrian background of the anointing is a complex matter. EVERETT FERGUSON, *Baptism*, 429 ff., comments that, in view of the *Acts of Thomas*, Syrian Christianity may originally even have known just a single anointing without baptism with water.

²⁰⁷ JEAN DANIELLOU, *Onction et baptême*, 65–70, provides an integral overview of the baptismal rites as Gregory would still have known them, in which the anointing with oil preceded the profession of faith and subsequently baptism. On p. 70 Daniélou contends that Gregory was the last great witness to the New Testament meaning of the anointing with the Spirit that preceded the profession of faith and baptism.

αὐτοῖς συστάσαν κτίσιν (103,20) περιλαμβάνει τήν τε ὁρατὴν καὶ ἀόρατον· ἐν αὐτοῖς γὰρ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα διὰ τοῦ ποιητοῦ τῶν αἰώνων. εἰ οὖν ἡ βασιλεία πάντοτε μετὰ τοῦ βασιλέως νοεῖται, ἡ δὲ ὑποχείριος φύσις ἄλλο τι παρὰ τὴν ἄρχουσαν ὁμολογεῖται, τίς ἡ ἀτοπία τῶν ἑαυτοῖς μαχομένων, τῶν προστιθέντων μὲν τὸ χρίσμα (103,25) τῷ κατὰ φύσιν βασιλεῖ ὡς ἀξίωμα, καταγόντων δὲ αὐτὸ τοῦτο εἰς τὴν ὑποχείριον τάξιν ὡς τῆς ἀξίας καταδεέστερον; εἰ μὲν γὰρ τῶν ὑπηκόων κατὰ τὴν φύσιν ἐστίν, πῶς τῷ τῆς βασιλείας ἀξιώματι τοῦ μονογενοῦς συναρμόζεται χρίσμα βασιλείας γινόμενον; εἰ δὲ τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ (103,30) συμπαραληφθῆναι εἰς τὴν τῆς βασιλείας μεγαλοπρέπειαν δεικνύται, τίς ἡ ἀνάγκη καθαιρεῖσθαι πάντα εἰς ιδιωτικὴν τε καὶ δουλικὴν ταπεινότητα τῇ δουλευούσῃ κτίσει συναριθμούμενον; οὐ γὰρ δὴ τὰ δύο περὶ αὐτοῦ λέγοντα δυνατόν (104,1) ἐστὶν ἐν ἑκατέρῳ τάληθῃ λέγειν, ὅτι καὶ ἡγεμονικὸν ἐστὶ καὶ ὑποχείριον. εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἡγεῖται, οὐ κυριεύεται· εἰ δὲ δουλεύει, οὐκέτι μετὰ τῆς βασιλευούσης φύσεως καταλαμβάνεται. ὡς γὰρ μετὰ ἀνθρώπων ἄνθρωποι καὶ μετὰ ἀγγέλων ἄγγελοι (104,5) καὶ πάντα μετὰ τῶν ὁμοφύλων ἐπιγινώσκεται, οὕτω μεθ' ἑνὸς ἑκατέρων ὁμολογεῖσθαι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἀναγκαῖον ἐστὶν ἢ μετὰ τῆς κυριεύουσας ἢ μετὰ τῆς ὑποκυπτούσης φύσεως. μέσον γὰρ τούτων ἐπιγινώσκει ὁ λόγος οὐδέν, ὥστε τινὰ φύσεως ιδιότητα ἐν μεθορίῳ τοῦ τε κτιστοῦ καὶ (104,10) τοῦ ἀκτίστου καινοτομηθεῖσαν μεταξὺ τούτων εἶναι νομίζεσθαι, ὡς καὶ ἀμφοτέρων μετέχειν καὶ οὐθέτερον τελείως εἶναι. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐνδέχεται μῖξιν τινὰ τῶν ἐναντίων καὶ συμπλοκὴν ἐννοῆσαι τοῦ κτιστοῦ πρὸς τὸ ἀκτιστον συνανακινησμένων καὶ δύο τῶν ἐναντίων εἰς μίαν ὑπόστασιν (104,15) συμμιγνυμένων· ὡς μὴ μόνον σύνθετον εἶναι τὸ διὰ τῆς ἁλλοκότου ταύτης μίξεως ἀναπλασσόμενον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐξ ἀνομοίων ἔχον τὴν σύνθεσιν καὶ κατὰ τὸν χρόνον οὐ συμφωνούντων· τοῦ γὰρ ἀκτίστως ὑφ' ἐστῶτος τὸ διὰ κτίσεως τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἔχον μεταγενέστερον πάντως ἐστίν, εἰ οὖν (104,20) μεμίχθαι τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος φύσιν πρὸς ἑκάτερα λέγουσιν, ἄρα καὶ τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου πρὸς τὸ νεώτερον μῖξιν τινὰ ἐννοήσουσι· καὶ ἔσται κατ' αὐτοὺς ἑαυτοῦ τι πρεσβύτερον καὶ ἑαυτοῦ τι πάλιν μεταγενέστερον, ὡς καὶ τῷ ἀκτίστῳ τὸ ἀρχαιότερον ἔχειν καὶ τῷ κτιστῷ τὸ νεώτερον. ἐπεὶ οὖν (104,25) τοῦτο φύσιν οὐκ ἔχει, ἀνάγκη πάντως τὸ ἕτερον τούτων ἐπὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἀληθὲς εἶναι λέγειν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ τὸ ἀκτιστον.

6.3.2 Translation

(103,14) We must next examine the following point. Without question, kingship is characterized by ruling over subordinates. What, then, is subordinate to the ruling nature? Surely, the idea encompasses the ages and all that is in them. It says, “Your kingdom is a kingdom over all ages.” (Ps LXX 144:3) When it says “ages”, it includes universally the entire creation, both visible and invisible, constituted in these ages. For in them all things were created by the one who made the ages (cf. Heb 1:2). So, if the kingship is always understood together with the king, and it is agreed that the subordinate nature is something differ-

ent from the ruling nature, how absurd it is that they fight against themselves by applying the anointing to him who is king by nature as a sign of dignity, while relegating this very same anointing to a subordinate rank as if it lacked dignity! If it belongs by nature among the subordinates, how will it conform to the dignity of the Only-Begotten's kingship upon becoming the anointing of kingship? But if it is shown to be a ruler (cf. Ps LXX 50:14) because it is included "in the majesty of the kingdom" (Ps LXX 144:12), what need is there to bring it all the way down to vulgar and slavish lowliness, ranking it with the servile creation?

Actually, it is quite impossible for both these two claims about it (104) to be true: that it is ruling and subordinate. If it rules, it has no lord. If it is a servant, it is no longer included with the royal nature. For just as humans are recognized [to belong] with humans, angels with angels, and all things with those of the same kind, so too the Holy Spirit must be acknowledged [to belong] with one or the other: either with the sovereign nature or with the one that obeys. After all, reason recognizes no intermediary between them, such that it supposes between them there is some characteristic mark of a nature invented on the border of the created and the uncreated, as if partaking of both but being neither of the two completely.

We surely cannot accept the idea that there is a kind of mixture and amalgamation of opposites, of the created with the uncreated, such that the two opposites are mixed and mingled together into a single subsistence. It is not only that the item fashioned through this unusual mixture is composite, but also that its composition comes from dissimilar components that are not even temporally aligned. For what has its existence by being created is certainly of a later origin than what exists in an uncreated manner. If, then, they say that the Spirit's nature is mixed with both, then they will conceive of a kind of mixture of the older with the younger. According to them, there will be something older than itself and, contrarily, of later origin than itself, since it will have a more ancient element because it is uncreated and a younger element because it is created. Since, in fact, this is not how it naturally is, we must at all costs in the case of the Spirit affirm the alternative which is true—namely, that it is uncreated.

6.3.3 Paraphrase

If the Spirit, as the anointing oil, is included in the majesty of the kingship of the Son, he cannot be considered as part of the creation which is in a condition of subordination. It is unthinkable that the Spirit could be a mixture uncreated and created. This is why the Spirit belongs as ruling principle to the uncreated nature.

6.3.4 Sub-questions

What help does Scripture offer Gregory?

Gregory is investigating the concept of subordination. Just as the concept of the father needs a son, so the concept of king requires subordination. Without subordinates, there is no kingship; without ruled, there are no rulers. Given this starting point, Gregory looks to Scripture for help. Ps LXX 144:13a offers him a point of reference. Gregory quotes this verse literally and then provides his exegesis of the concept of αἰῶνες. He equates the αἰῶνες with the creation and adds that this refers to the visible *and* the invisible creation.²⁰⁸ In his commentary of Eccles 3:11 in *Eccl*, Gregory defines the concept of αἰών as follows. After almost literally quoting Eccles 3:11a–b (Τὰ σύμπαντα ἃ ἐποίησε καλὰ ἐν καιρῷ αὐτοῦ, καὶ γε σὺν τὸν αἰῶνα ἔδωκεν ἐν καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν, *Eccl* VIII GNO V. 440, 2–3), Gregory describes the concept of αἰών in the following words:

Time, which is a dimensional idea, by itself signifies the whole creation which comes about in it. Therefore by referring to the container the sentence points to everything contained in it.²⁰⁹

Eccl VIII GNO V. 440, 3–6

In addition to αἰών, Gregory also uses the terms διάστημα and διάστασις for the concept of extension and duration, space and time. These terms, together with the concept of κίνησις, point to the abiding difference between God and all created things.²¹⁰ The διάστημα of necessity also includes human language.²¹¹ This

²⁰⁸ WERNER JAEGER, *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre*, 20–21, commented in relation to this *locus*: “Augenscheinlich waren die Gegner der Gottheit des Hl. Geistes bemüht, dessen Wirklichkeit auf die menschliche Sphäre zu beschränken.” The Holy Spirit is not just a connection between God and humankind.

²⁰⁹ *Eccl* VIII GNO V. 440, 3–6: ὁ δὲ αἰὼν διαστηματικόν τι νόημα ὧν πᾶσαν δι’ ἑαυτοῦ σημαίνει τὴν κτίσιν τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ γενομένην. οὐκοῦν ἐκ τοῦ περιέχοντος ἅπαν τὸ ἐμπεριεχόμενον δείκνυσιν ὁ λόγος (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL). For other *loci* where ὁ αἰὼν or οἱ αἰῶνες are used for the creation as a whole: *Lexicon Gregorianum* I, col. 124–125a, s.v. αἰών.

²¹⁰ *Eun* II GNO I. 246, 19–21 contrasts the uncreated nature with the created nature: “The one (sc. created nature) stretches out in measurable extension, being bounded by time and space, the other (sc. uncreated nature) transcends any notion of measure.” (αὕτη διαστηματικῇ τινι παρατάσει συμπαρεκτείνεται, καὶ χρόνῳ καὶ τόπῳ περιειργόμενη, ἐκείνη ὑπερεκπίπτει πᾶσαν διαστήματος ἔννοιαν, transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

²¹¹ *Eun* II GNO I. 287, 26–29 states that there is no voice or language in the uncreated reality, between Father and Son. The idea of διάστασις is lacking here. See also ALDEN A. MOSSHAMMER, *Disclosing but not Disclosed. Gregory of Nyssa as Deconstructionist*, in: HUBERTUS R. DROBNER & CHRISTOPH KLOCK (ed.), *Studien zu Gregor von Nyssa und der Christlichen Spätantike*, Leiden 1990, 99–123.

extension in space and time, αἰών or διάστημα, in its turn also belongs to the created reality (*EccI* VII GNO V. 412,14): τὸ διάστημα οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ κτίσις ἐστίν.²¹²

The position that Gregory chooses here in *Maced* on the basis of Scripture is of crucial importance to him: in view of the kingship of the Spirit, he concludes that Scripture teaches that what is subordinate to this kingship is the whole created reality, created by the maker of the ages, διὰ τοῦ ποιητοῦ τῶν αἰώνων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 103,21. The αἰῶνες naturally also belong to the created reality. Gregory demonstrates that it is Scripture that says that the Spirit, who is God's kingship, rules over the created reality. This places the Spirit on the side of the uncreated reality.

How does the anointing oil function in Gregory's argument?

Just before, Gregory has argued that the Son and the Spirit are not separated by διάστημα:²¹³

The notion of anointing intimates through riddles that there is no gap between the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Maced GNO III.I. 102,31–103,1

The anointing oil functioned here as the image of the ineffable reality. Just as no distinction can be made between the anointing oil that is applied to the body of the king, and him who is anointed by this oil, so no distinction is conceivable between the Spirit, who is the anointing oil of the kingship, and the Son, who is the king:

Accordingly, the one who would touch him by faith must first have contact with the ointment.

Maced GNO III.I. 103,5–6

212 Cf. HANS VON BALTHASAR, *Présence et pensée. Essai sur la philosophie religieuse de Grégoire de Nysse*, Paris 1942, 2–3: the categories of space and time can be regarded “comme la substance intime de son être” (i.e. l'être fini); JEAN DANIELOU, *L'être et le temps chez Grégoire de Nysse*, Leiden 1970, 198: “l'αἰών, à l'intérieur duquel l'homme est enfermé par sa nature.” T. PAUL VERGHESE, *Διάστημα* and *διάστασις*, 253, emphasises that *διάστημα* is present only on the side of creation, not on the side of the Creator, to whom creation in its fullness is immediately present: “an ontological-epistemological ‘one-way’ gap between the Creator and the Creation.”

213 Gregory uses this statement that there is no διάστημα between Son and Spirit to announce what he is going to argue concerning the difference between the uncreated reality, in which there is no διάστημα, and the created reality that is characterised by its being bound to time and space.

In his inquiry into that over which the Spirit, who is the kingship of the Only-Begotten One, rules, Gregory returns to the anointing oil, which functions as the imagining and imagined proof, provided by Scripture, that the Spirit belongs to the side of uncreated reality. The Spirit as anointing oil can only be suited for the kingship of the Only-Begotten One if he belongs to the uncreated reality by nature:

If it belongs by nature among the subordinates, how will it conform to the dignity of the Only-Begotten's kingship upon becoming the anointing of kingship?

Maced GNO III.I. 103,27–29

Scripture teaches that it follows inescapably from the fact that the Spirit is the anointing oil of the Only-Begotten One, the uncreated king by nature, and must thus be included in the majesty of this king, that the Spirit cannot be part of the creation that lives in subordination to the king.²¹⁴ Gregory assumes *a priori* that there is no middle way between the uncreated and the created reality. He will address this subject further on.

214 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, *Gregory of Nyssa's Pneumatology in Context*, 259–285, provides an overview of how earlier Church Fathers (Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius, the writings against Eunomius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Basil) used the theme of the Spirit as anointing oil before Gregory. Radde-Gallwitz rightly views the identification of the Spirit and the anointing oil as an indication of the glory and the kingship of the Spirit, and thus of his dignity; he speaks on p. 260 of a “dignity-based pneumatology”. He subsequently regards this dignity as a hermeneutical category in its own right (p. 278), separate from the categories of the nature of the Spirit and of his activities *ad extra*. Radde-Gallwitz then overplays the distinction between the category of the activities *ad extra* and the category of the dignity. This is a result of the fact that he fails to connect the glory of the Spirit as kingship and as anointing oil with the baptism of the believing Christian, *the* activity *ad extra* par excellence of the Spirit. In fact, Gregory dwells at length on the Spirit as the kingship and the anointing immediately before his exposition on baptism. In the works of Gregory, there is a close connection between his theology and liturgy, overlooked by Radde-Gallwitz. He does acknowledge (p. 260) that the Spirit shares in the dignity of him whom he anoints, the Son, but does not connect this with the fact that the Spirit ultimately *ad extra* permits the baptizand to share in the divine glory and draws him or her into the inner-Trinitarian glory. In his study *Gregory of Nyssa's Doctrinal Works. A Literary Study*, Oxford 2018, 72, 75 and 260, Radde-Gallwitz does regard the eternal anointing of Christ by the Spirit as “a tremendous resource for Gregory's theology of the incarnate economy of Christ”, given Gregory's primary interest in the life-giving work of the Spirit in baptism, but mistakenly thinks that this economic aspect is not yet visible in *Maced*. He believes this economic aspect is visible only in the works in which the dignity of the Spirit is not under contention, such as *Tunc et ipse*, *Antirr*h and *Cant*.

Gregory calls on reason for help. What argument does he use to demonstrate that the Spirit is uncreated, and what starting point does he choose in doing so?

Gregory calls on reason in his attempt to deny that there is an intermediate condition between the uncreated and the created nature. In a strongly accentuated argument, he shows the impossibility of any mixture between the uncreated nature and the created nature, between the ruler and the subordinate, between that which exists of all eternity and that which came into existence in time. The consequence would be that the resulting hypostasis would not be fully uncreated nor fully created. To demonstrate the absurdity of this intermediate position between the uncreated and the created nature, Gregory limits himself to the category of time as a specific characteristic of being created. It is impossible that the temporal should be mixed with the eternal and the timeless to form a single hypostasis. In *Antirrh*, this argument plays an important role in his rejection of the view of Apollinarius and his followers, who, in his heterodoxy, called the Only-Begotten One a celestial human being (ἄνθρωπον οὐράνιον, *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 191,17), a hybrid of the uncreated and created nature. According to Gregory, the danger of this theory is that the human nature would be absorbed by the divine nature.²¹⁵

This part of his attack on his opponents is very important, because he directly opposes a quotation derived from them: εἰ οὖν μεμίχθαι τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος φύσιν πρὸς ἑκάτερα λέγουσιν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 104,19–20. The Pneumatomachi considered the Spirit to be a hybrid being that partook both of the created and of the uncreated nature:

After all, reason recognizes no intermediary between them, such that it supposes between them there is some characteristic mark of a nature invented on the border of the created and the uncreated, as if partaking of both (ἀμφοτέρων μετέχειν) but being neither of the two completely.

Maced GNO III.I. 104,9–12

215 GEORGIOS LEKKAS, Gregory of Nyssa's refutation of the pre-ensoulment of God the Word in his *Antirrheticus adversus Apollinarium*, in: VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism. Proceedings of the 11th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Tübingen, 17–20 September 2008* (VCS 106), Leiden 2011, 557–564, p. 559: "More precisely, Gregory contended that the two different natures, created and uncreated, cannot unite to form a new third nature, on the Platonic grounds that the composition of a single nature out of two pre-existing natures presupposes an ontological similarity between the natures being united, a presupposition which of course does not apply in the case of the incarnation of the Word of God. According to the Bishop of Nyssa, the incarnate Word contained both natures whole and entire, since the patristic understanding was that man should exper-

Given the fact that the Spirit partakes of the uncreated nature, the ruling principle, that which is timeless, it is inevitable that the Spirit partakes in this in fullness, and thus fully lacks createdness, subordination, and temporality.

What absurdity does Gregory reproach his opponents for?

Gregory speaks with a certain irony about his opponents who begin by fighting themselves in their fight against the Spirit (τῶν ἑαυτοῖς μαχομένων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 103,24). He again reproaches them for their absurdity, ἀτοπία (*Maced* GNO III.I. 103,23). In *Maced* GNO III.I. 94,14 he accused his opponents of the height of absurdity and impiety (φρικτὸν τοῦτο καὶ πάσης ἀτοπίας καὶ βλασφημίας ἐπέκεινα, *Maced* GNO III.I. 94,14–15), because, by refusing to ascribe the fitting, divine epithets to the Spirit, they inescapably and logically ascribe to him the opposite epithets. In line with this accusation, Gregory here again accuses his opponents of absurdity: as if the king, who is of uncreated nature, could receive from the Spirit who belongs to the subordinate reality the royal dignity of the anointing. Gregory demonstrates that the notion of a mixture of uncreated and created nature is contrary to common sense.

In the following section, *Maced* GNO III.I. 104,27–105,18, Gregory elaborates even further on the absurdity of his opponents and he generalises the gift which the Spirit gives: in addition to giving dignity to the uncreated king, he also gives gifts to the created reality. Gifts which, Gregory contends, the Spirit can only give if he possesses these gifts by nature, viz. from his uncreated, divine nature.

6.4 *The Spirit Possesses the Divine Nature and Thus Provides All Good Things from His Own Possession (GNO III.I. 104,27–105,18)*

6.4.1 Greek Text

(104,27) Καὶ γὰρ καὶ κεῖνο ὅσῃ ἔχει τὴν ἀτοπίαν σκοπήσωμεν. πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ κτίσει νοουμένων κατ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο, τὸ διὰ κτίσεως ἐσχηκέναι τὸ εἶναι, τὴν ὁμοιμίαν ἐχόντων, τίς ἢ (104,30) αἰτία ἢ τὸ πνεῦμα τῶν λοιπῶν ἀποκρίνουσα εἰς τὸ (τῷ) πατρὶ καὶ τῷ υἱῷ συνταχθῆναι; εὐρίσκεται γὰρ ἐκ τῆς ἀκολουθίας τοῦ λόγου οὐκ ὄν ἐκ τῆς κτίσεως τὸ τῇ ἀκτίστῳ συνθεωρούμενον φύσει· ἢ εἰ ἐντεῦθεν εἶη, μὴδὲν πλεον τῆς ὁμοφύλου ἰσχύειν κτίσεως μὴδὲ δύνασθαι τῇ ὑπερκειμένῃ συναρμόζεσθαι φύσει. (105,1) εἰ δὲ λέγοιεν καὶ κτιστὸν εἶναι καὶ ὑπὲρ τὴν κτίσιν δύνασθαι, πάλιν εὐρίσκεται αὕτη πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἢ κτιστὴ στασιάζουσα φύσις καὶ μεριζομένη πρὸς τὸ κρατοῦν τε καὶ ὑποχείριον ὡς τὸ μὲν εὐεργετεῖν, τὸ δὲ εὐεργετῆσθαι καὶ τὸ μὲν ἀγιά-(105,5)ζειν, τὸ δὲ ἀγιάζεσθαι· καὶ

ience the paradisaical state of his 'new life' while remaining himself, not that he should be assimilated by the higher divine essence."

πάντα ὅσα παρὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος χορηγεῖσθαι τῇ κτίσει πεπίστευται, ἐκείνῳ μὲν παρεῖναι πλουσίως πηγάζοντα καὶ εἰς ἄλλους ὑπερχέμενα, τὴν δὲ κτίσιν ἐπιδεᾶ τῆς ἐκείθεν ἀναδιδομένης εὐεργεσίας καὶ χάριτος καθεστάναι καὶ ἐκ μετουσίας δέχεσθαι τὴν τῶν (105,10) ἀγαθῶν κοινωνίαν τῶν ἐκ τοῦ ὁμογενοῦς προχομένων. ἀποκληρώσει γὰρ ὅμοιον καὶ προσωποληψίᾳ τὸ τοιοῦτόν ἐστι μηδεμιᾶς ἐν τῇ φύσει προτιμῆσεως οὔσης μὴ τὰ αὐτὰ δύνασθαι τὰ κατ' οὐδὲν ἀλλήλων ἐν τῷ εἶναι τὴν διαφορὰν ἔχοντα. ἅπερ οὐδένα οἶμαι τῶν εὖ φρονούντων συνομολογεῖν· ἡ (105,15) γὰρ οὐ παρέχει τοῖς ἄλλοις, εἴπερ οὐ φυσικῶς ἔχει, ἢ εἴπερ διδόναι πεπίστευται, τὸ ἔχειν πάντως προωμολόγηται. τοῦτο δὲ μόνῃ τῆς θείας φύσεως ἰδίον ἐστι καὶ ἐξαίρετον τὸ παρεκτικὸν ἀγαθῶν εἶναι, αὐτὸ δὲ μηδενὸς ἐπεισάκτου προσδέεσθαι.

6.4.2 Translation

(104,27) After all, let us consider what a great absurdity the alternative contains. All things which can be thought of in the creation have equal honor in this very respect, namely, that they have their existence by being created. So, what causes the Spirit to be set apart from the rest and ranked with the Father and the Son? The sequence of the argument has enabled us to discover that there is nothing from the creation that is contemplated along with the uncreated nature. Or, even if there were, it would be no more powerful than its created peers, nor could it be attached to the transcendent nature. (105) If they were to claim that it is possible for it to be both created and beyond the creation, then the created nature itself will once again be found to be at odds with itself, divided into ruler and subordinate, such that one part is benefactor, but the other receives benefit; one part sanctifies, but the other is sanctified. And all that the Holy Spirit is believed to supply to creation, springing forth abundantly and overflowing to others, belongs to it. Meanwhile, the creation, which stands in need of the aid and grace given from that source, receives by participation a communion in the good things that pour forth from one who is of the same kind as it! This kind of thing resembles choosing by lot and playing favorites. Even though [according to our opponents] there is no natural preference between [the Holy Spirit and creation], these things that in no way differ from one another in being do not have the same powers. I do not think that any person of sound mind would agree with this. Either the Spirit does not provide these goods to others, since it does not have them in its own nature, or if one believes that the Spirit does give them, he has undoubtedly already conceded that it has them. And this is a unique and distinctive feature of the divine nature alone, namely, to provide goods while standing in need of nothing external.

6.4.3 Paraphrase

It is absurd to believe that the Spirit as a created being could stand above creation and distribute gifts. The Spirit is able to distribute gifts because in his divinity he possesses them by nature. It is a distinguishing feature only of the divine nature that it provides all good things but itself does not require anything external.

6.4.4 Sub-questions

What shift does Gregory make in moving from the inner-Trinitarian gift to gifts to creation?

The shift that Gregory now makes is a momentous one. We are approaching the intersecting point of this work. Gregory began by discussing the inner-Trinitarian gift of the Spirit to the Son: the anointing of kingship. Now he is moving to the gifts *ad extra*, the gifts that the Spirit gives to creation, gifts he possesses by nature. These good gifts that the Spirit gives to the creatures culminate in baptism, the gracious gift of life, which Gregory addresses in the section that follows his statement that the Spirit possesses the divine nature and therefore provides all good things from his own possession.

What strict criterion does Gregory use to distinguish between the divine nature and the nature of the created reality, and what are the consequences of this distinction for his view of the Spirit?

Only the divine nature is characterised by its ability to distribute the good gifts that it possesses by nature, while having no need of any supplement.²¹⁶ If we believe that the Spirit distributes gifts, gifts from his own possession, then the Spirit cannot have his origins in the created nature, but belongs to the uncreated nature; this is what the logic of reasoning teaches us (ἐκ τῆς ἀκολουθίας τοῦ λόγου, *Maced* GNO III.I. 104,31–32). In his rhetorical approach, Gregory follows the argument of his opponents in an attempt to demonstrate the absurdity (τὴν ἀτοπίαν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 104,27) of his opponents and to appeal to the right-minded people (τῶν εὖ φρονούντων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 105,14). Here, too,

²¹⁶ This is the first place in *Maced* where Gregory uses *παρεκτικόν* (*Maced* GNO III.I. 105,17–18), meaning here the divine, in combination with *ἀγαθών*. In the rest of the text he uses it on various occasions in a specific sense: for the Spirit as the giver of life (τὸ παρεκτικόν τῆς ζωῆς, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,11); for the Spirit as the giver of the gift (τὸ παρεκτικόν τοῦ χαρίσματος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,16); for the Spirit as the giver of that gift, viz. life (τὸ παρεκτικόν τῆς χάριτος ταύτης, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,26–27); for the Spirit as the giver of all good things, and above all of life itself (ἀγαθῶν πάντων παρεκτικόν καὶ πρό γε ἀπάντων αὐτῆς τῆς ζωῆς, *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,23); for the benefactor who provides what is good, meaning the Spirit (τὸν τῶν ἀγαθῶν παρεκτικόν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 109,30).

Gregory assumes that his opponents think that a hybrid form is possible: the Spirit belongs to the divine, but his existence originates in creation. If then the Spirit distributes of his gifts, he necessarily distributes in dependence on creation, so that, absurdly, that which rules and that which is ruled originate within creation itself, and as a result, so do the benefactor and the recipient, the sanctifier and the sanctified.²¹⁷ Right-minded people cannot assent to the idea that things that do not differ in any respect in being could differ in what they are capable of doing. Therefore we must inescapably accept that the Spirit possesses the gifts that he distributes by nature (τὸ ἔχειν πάντως, *Maced GNO III.I. 105,16*) and is therefore of divine nature.

6.5 *In Baptism, the Spirit Gives the Gracious Gift of Life That Is Brought to Completion, from the Father, through the Mediation of the Son, Thanks to the Activity of the Spirit (GNO III.I. 105,19–106,24)*

6.5.1 Greek Text

(105,19) Ἐπειτα καὶ τοῦτο σκοπήσωμεν. τῷ ἁγίῳ βαπτίσματι—(105,20) τί διὰ τούτου πραγματευόμεθα; ἄρ' οὐχὶ τὸ ζωῆς μετέχειν οὐκέτι θανάτῳ ὑποκειμένης; οὐδένα (ἄν) ἀντειπεῖν οἶμαι τῷ λόγῳ τὸν γε καὶ ὁπωσοῦν ἐν Χριστιανοῖς ἀριθμούμενον. τί οὖν; ἄρ' ἐν τῷ ὕδατι ἡ ζωοποιός ἐστι δύναμις τῷ συμπαραλαμβανομένῳ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ βαπτίσματος χάριν· ἢ (105,25) παντὶ δῆλον ὅτι τοῦτο μὲν τῆς σωματικῆς ἕνεκεν διακονίας παρείληπται οὐδὲν παρ' ἑαυτοῦ πρὸς τὸν ἁγιασμὸν εἰσφερόμενον, εἰ μὴ μεταποιηθεῖ διὰ τοῦ ἁγιάσματος.²¹⁸ τὸ δὲ ζωοποιοῦν τοὺς βαπτιζομένους τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι, καθὼς φησιν ὁ κύριος περὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦτο λέγων τῇ ἰδίᾳ φωνῇ ὅτι Τὸ πνεῦμά (105,30) ἐστὶ τὸ ζωοποιοῦν. ζωοποιεῖ δὲ οὐκ αὐτὸ μόνον εἰς τὴν τελείωσιν τῆς χάριτος ταύτης διὰ τῆς πίστεως λαμβανόμενον, ἀλλὰ χρὴ τὴν εἰς τὸν κύριον προϋποκεισθαι πίστιν, δι' ἧς ἡ ζωτικὴ χάρις τοῖς πιστεύουσι παραγίνεται, καθὼς (106,1) εἴρηται παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου ὅτι Οὓς θέλει ζωοποιεῖ. ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἡ διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ διακονουμένη χάρις ἡρτῆται τῆς ἀγεννήτου πηγῆς, διὰ τοῦτο προηγείσθαι τὴν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς πίστιν ὁ λόγος διδάσκει τοῦ ζωογονούντος τὰ (106,5) πάντα, καθὼς φησιν ὁ ἀπόστολος, ὡς ἂν ἐκείθεν ἀφορμηθεῖσαν τὴν ζωοποιὸν χάριν καθάπερ ἐκ πηγῆς τινος τὴν ζωὴν πηγαζούσης διὰ τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ, ὅς ἐστιν ἡ ἀληθὴς ζωὴ, τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ τοῦ πνεύματος τελειοῦσθαι τοῖς ἀξιουμένοις. εἰ οὖν ἡ ζωὴ διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος, τὸ δὲ βάπτισμα ἐν ὀνόματι (106,10) πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ πνεύματος ἁγίου τὴν τελείωσιν ἔχει, τί λέγουσιν

²¹⁷ Gregory here (*Maced GNO III.I. 105,4–5*) mentions the activities of the Spirit as ruling principle: εὐεργετεῖν, ἀγιάζειν. He generalises the Spirit's benefactions as his gifts to creation: χορηγεῖσθαι τῇ κτίσει (*Maced GNO III.I. 105,6*).

²¹⁸ There appears to be a typographical error in the Greek text of *Maced GNO III.I. 105,27* in GNO: ἁγιάσματος should be ἁγιάσματος.

οἱ τὸ παρεκτικὸν τῆς ζωῆς ἀντ' οὐδενὸς λογιζόμενοι; εἰ γὰρ μικρὰ ἡ χάρις, εἰπάτωσαν τὸ τῆς ζωῆς τιμιώτερον. εἰ δὲ πᾶν ὅτιπέρ ἐστι τίμιον τῆς ζωῆς ἐστὶ δεύτερον, ἐκείνης λέγω τῆς ὑψηλῆς καὶ τιμίας, ἥ κατ' οὐδὲν ἐπικοινωνεῖ ἡ (106,15) ἄλογος φύσις, πῶς τολμῶσι τὸ τηλικούτον χάρισμα, μᾶλλον δὲ αὐτὸ τὸ παρεκτικὸν τοῦ χαρίσματος κατασμικρύνειν ταῖς ἑαυτῶν ὑπολήψεσι καὶ κατασπᾶν εἰς τὴν ὑποχείριον φύσιν (τῆς) θείας τε καὶ ὑψηλῆς διαζεύξαντες; εἶτα καὶ εἰ μικρὸν τὸ τῆς ζωῆς λέγουσι χάρισμα, ὥς μηδὲν διὰ τούτου σεμνόν (106,20) τε καὶ μέγα τῇ φύσει τοῦ χαριζομένου ἐμφαίνεσθαι, πῶς οὐ λογίζονται τὸ ἀκόλουθον, ὅτι ὁ αὐτὸς ἀναγκάσει λόγος καὶ περὶ τοῦ μονογενοῦς καὶ περὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς μηδὲν ὑποτίθεσθαι μέγα τῆς αὐτῆς ζωῆς, ἣν διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ἔχομεν, διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς χορηγουμένης;

6.5.2 Translation

(105,19) We must next consider the following point. What is our aim when we perform holy baptism? Is it not to partake of a life that is no longer subject to death? No one, I think, who can in any way be counted as a Christian would contradict this explanation. What then? Does the life-giving power reside in the water used to convey the grace of baptism? Rather, it is clear to everyone that this is used to minister to the body, though it contributes nothing of its own to sanctification unless it has been transformed by consecration. But the one who gives life to those who are being baptized is the Spirit, as the Lord said about it, making this very point in his own voice, "It is the Spirit that gives life." (Jn 6:63) Now, when the Spirit is received for the completion of this grace through faith, it does not give life on its own. Rather, faith in the Lord must first be established, through which the life-giving grace comes to those who believe, just as the Lord said, "He gives life to whomever he wishes." (Jn 5:21) (106) But since the grace administered through the Son depends upon the unbegotten fount, this is why the account teaches that there must first be faith in the name of the Father who "gives life to all things" (1 Tim 6:13), as the apostle says, seeing that from him the life-giving grace originates, gushing forth with life as if from a spring through the Only-Begotten Son, who is the true life (cf. Jn 14:6), and is made complete in those who are worthy by the activity of the Spirit. So then, since life comes through baptism, and baptism has its completion in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, what are these people saying when they place no value on the giver of life? After all, if the gift is trivial, they must tell us what is more valuable than life. But if everything whatsoever is of secondary value in comparison with life (I mean that lofty and honorable life in which the irrational nature has no share at all), then how can they dare according to their own lights to downgrade such a valuable gift, or rather the very giver of the gift, and to drag it down into the subordinate nature, severing it from the divine and lofty nature?

Now, if they claim that the gift of life is trivial, such that, when it is given, it reveals nothing august and great in the nature of the giver, how will they escape the reasoning that follows from this? For by the same principle, we should not think anything great about the Only-Begotten and about the Father himself, since the same life that we possess through the Spirit is supplied to us through the Son from the Father.

6.5.3 Paraphrase

In baptism, the Spirit gives the life-giving gift of grace that is brought to completion, from the Father, through the mediation of the Son, thanks to the activity of the Spirit, and that sanctifies those who receive baptism in faith in the Father and the Son and the Spirit. Having a low opinion of the Spirit as the giver of life will result in having a low opinion of the gift of life, and of the other givers of this gift, the Father and the Son.

6.5.4 Sub-questions

What is the rhetorical structure of this section?

Gregory continues his inquiry. He literally repeats (*Maced GNO III.I. 105,19*) the opening sentence of the section that begins in *Maced GNO III.I. 103,14* with: Ἐπειτα καὶ τοῦτο σκοπήσωμεν. In that section, Gregory investigates the consequence of equating the Spirit with the anointing oil of the Son, concluding that the Spirit belongs as ruling principle to the uncreated nature. In the following section, *Maced GNO III.I. 104,27–105,18*, he continues his inquiry and again uses the term σκοπήσωμεν: Καὶ γὰρ κάκεινο ὁσὴν ἔχει τὴν ἀτοπίαν σκοπήσωμεν (*Maced GNO III.I. 104,27*); this time to study how absurd it is to assume that the Spirit as a created being could distribute gifts while standing above creation. By repeating the opening sentence of *Maced GNO III.I. 103,14*, Gregory gives the impression that he is beginning a new part of his inquiry. In fact he gives a baptismal catechesis about the meaning of the coherence between the Spirit and the water, using questions and answers. He begins with a question about the effects of baptism. Gregory answers this question with a rhetorical question containing the answer that every Christian will affirm. When the baptismal catechesis has ended with the conclusion that imperishable life comes through baptism, and that baptism finds completion in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Gregory has acquired a weapon to use against those who have a low opinion of the Spirit as the giver of this life. He challenges them to explain what could be more precious than this life, and uses a phrase he has used before: *they must tell us* (εἰπάτωσαν, *Maced GNO III.I. 106,12*).²¹⁹ In this

²¹⁹ Almost always, including here, Gregory uses εἰπάτωσαν in combination with a conditional

way Gregory catches them in a trap. They must choose either to acknowledge that the gift of imperishable life is great, thus making it impossible to disparage the giver of this gift, or to disparage the gift of imperishable life, the giver of this gift, *and*, in doing so, given the law of logic (τὸ ἀκόλουθον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,21), accept the consequence that the Father and the Son are concomitantly disparaged as the other givers. Gregory cannot imagine that anything could be considered to be higher than imperishable life. He sneers at those who do. He accuses them of rashness, which causes them, in their conceit, to disparage the giver of this life according to their own insights:

then how can they dare according to their own lights to downgrade such a valuable gift, or rather the very giver of the gift, and to drag it down into the subordinate nature, severing it from the divine and lofty nature?

Maced GNO III.I. 106,15–18

Why does baptism appear at the end of Gregory's third response?

We have come to the intersecting point of this work. After Gregory has discussed the inner-Trinitarian gift of the Spirit to the Son, the anointing of the kingship, he moves in the previous section (*Maced* GNO III.I. 104,27–105,18) to the gifts *ad extra*, the gifts that the Spirit gives to creation, gifts that he possesses by nature. These good gifts that the Spirit gives to the creatures culminate in baptism, the gracious gift of life that is no longer subject to death. In effecting this transition *ad extra*, Gregory involves the creation and the people who live in it in the divine life in which the Spirit permits them to share through the gift of baptism. In his explanation of the predicate τὸ ζωοποιεῖν (*Maced* GNO III.I.

clause beginning with εἰ which contains the opponents' assertion. Gregory sometimes but not always shares the assertion that his opponents accept. In *Maced* GNO III.I. 95,22, εἰπάτωσαν is accompanied by the sarcastic οἱ σοφοί, preceded by a clause ending with ὁμολογοῦσιν in which Gregory accepts his opponents' false acknowledgement that the Spirit is perfect in every thought that is expressed in relation to the good. In *Maced* GNO III.I. 98,10, εἰπάτωσαν is accompanied by οἱ ταῦτα λέγοντες, preceded by a clause to which ταῦτα refers back: the assertion, which Gregory regards as absurd, that the Spirit was not involved in creation. In *Maced* GNO III.I. 99,7 and 99,17, εἰπάτωσαν is preceded by a clause containing the position of his opponents, which Gregory regards as absurd, in relation to the creation (the absence of the Spirit from creation and an impediment that prevented the Spirit from sharing in creation). In *Maced* GNO III.I. 102,17, εἰπάτωσαν is accompanied by οἱ καθαιρούντες τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος δόξαν καὶ τῇ ὑποχειρίῳ φύσει συγκατατάσσοντες, which in this case is not preceded by any εἰ-sentence. Even without any preceding εἰ-sentence, εἰπάτωσαν also functions as a means to continue the argument that will lead to the conclusion that Gregory's opponents teach absurdity. Something similar occurs in *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,21.

105,28) for the Spirit, Gregory explicitly cites the external ceremony of baptism as a visible sign of the activity of God's invisible power.

The orthodox faith does not limit its religious observance to professing the right doctrines, but also, and especially, connects these to reception of the sacraments, in this case baptism, which derive their force from the invocation of the three divine persons. In *Eun* III GNO II. 284,6–288,17, Gregory clearly enunciates this in his confrontation with the heterodox faith of Eunomius (Gregory categorises this as Ἑλληνισμός, *Eun* III GNO II. 286,13). Gregory accuses Eunomius of rejecting the divine names of the baptismal command, the Christian forms of life, and the ecclesiastical rites, and thus ultimately baptism and the Eucharist.²²⁰

What characteristic of the Spirit does Gregory place centre stage here?

In this section, Gregory places the life-creating activity of the Spirit centre stage. In the previous sections, Gregory emphasised the full participation of the Spirit in the creation in which the Father and the Son and the Spirit are fully involved. In this section, Gregory characterises the life that the Spirit creates: the life that is given through baptism is characterised as “that is no longer subject to death”. (τὸ ζωῆς μετέχειν οὐκέτι θανάτῳ ὑποκειμένης, *Maced* GNO III.I. 105,20–21). The eternal life that requires a new birth from death that is possible through the life-creating power (ἡ ζωοποιὸς δύναμις) of the Trinity, Gregory says in his *Epist* V GNO VIII.II. 32,17–20:

Therefore, since the power that gives life to those who are reborn from death to eternal life comes from the Holy Trinity upon those who are deemed worthy of the grace through faith, ...²²¹

It is precisely here in *Maced*, at the intersecting point of the work, in Gregory's explanation of the life-creating force of the baptismal waters (ἐν τῷ ὕδατι ἡ ζωοποιὸς ἐστὶ δύναμις, *Maced* GNO III.I. 105,23), that the Spirit appears for the first time specifically as the life-creating divine person, the qualification that the Creed of Constantinople ascribes to him.²²² Gregory then uses this epithet of

220 GORDON S. MIKOSKI, Baptism, Trinity, and ecclesial pedagogy in the thought of Gregory of Nyssa, in: *Scottish Journal of Theology* 59 (2006) 175–182, has pointed on the basis of texts from *Eun*, *Or cat* and *Maced* to the coherence between the doctrines on the Trinity, liturgical practices, and Christian forms of life, a life-long process of transformation.

221 *Epist* V GNO VIII.II. 32,17–20: ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν ἡ ζωοποιὸς δύναμις ἐπὶ τῶν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου πρὸς τὴν αἰώνιον ζωὴν ἀναγεννωμένων διὰ τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος παραγίνεται τοῖς μετὰ πίστεως καταξιούμενοις τῆς χάριτος (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

222 The translation life-creating is better than life-giving, because the Greek verb ποιέω is used

the Spirit as sharing in the one divine power that creates life on eight occasions.²²³ In *Maced* GNO III.I. 105,28, it is the Spirit who brings the baptizands to life: τὸ δὲ ζωοποιοῦν τοὺς βαπτιζομένους τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι, according to the Lord's word: Τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι τὸ ζωοποιοῦν (*Maced* GNO III.I. 105,29–30). The Spirit brings to life (ζωοποιεῖ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 105,30), on condition that faith in the Spirit is accompanied by faith in the Son who brings to life (Οὓς θέλει ζωοποιεῖ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,1) and in the life-giving Father, to whom is attributed the qualification of 2 Tim 5:13 (τοῦ ζωογονούντος τὰ πάντα, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,4–5). In this way the life-giving gift of grace (τὴν ζωοποιὸν χάριν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,6) can come to completion. In *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,21, Gregory confirms the holiness of the Spirit (holy by nature, κατὰ φύσιν ἅγιος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,19), which is equal to that of the Father and the Son. The first thing that Gregory mentions as a sign of the holiness of the Spirit is his life-creating power (κατὰ τὸ ζωοποιόν). The Spirit provides all good things, and first and foremost life itself (ἀγαθῶν πάντων παρεκτικὸν καὶ πρό γε ἀπάντων αὐτῆς τῆς ζωῆς, *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,23–24). In *Maced* GNO III.I. 109,31–32, Gregory opposes those who refuse to give fitting honour to the Spirit; the epithet for the Spirit here becomes a noun (τὸν ζωοποιὸν ἀτιμάζεις). At the end of *Maced*, Gregory clarifies that the life-creating power of the Spirit is none other than that of the Son and the Father (εἰς μίαν δύναμιν, μίαν ἀγαθότητα, μίαν ζωοποιὸν ἐξουσίαν, μίαν θεότητα, μίαν ζωὴν πιστεύων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 115,24–26). It is precisely the life-creating power in which Father, Son, and Spirit manifest the unity of their nature. The structure of grace is Trinitarian.²²⁴ Scripture, Gregory says in *Ref Eun* GNO II. 402,22–26, testifies to the fact that the Spirit creates life in the same way as the Father and the Son (ἀλλὰ μὴν ζωοποιεῖν ὁμοίως πατρί τε καὶ υἱῷ τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτὸς ὁ λόγος διαμαρτύρεται); this is why the Spirit, because of the full equality of the activities (διὰ τῆς ταυτότητος τῶν ἐνεργημάτων, *Ref Eun* GNO II. 402,25–26), does not stand

in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew **אֵלֹהִים** of Gen 1. Gen LXX 1 reads: 'Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν.

223 JAROSLAV PELIKAN, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 305, has spoken on the basis of the Cappadocians' argument on the life-creating work of the Spirit, of the importance of this point for the development of Christian doctrine, specifically the definition of the orthodox dogma of the Trinity, but also for the interchange between faith and reasoning: "a particularly intriguing documentation of the process by which faith could give fullness to reasoning, but also of the process by which reasoning gave fuller expression to faith, the faith represented by Nazianzus's 'spirit of speaking mysteries and dogmas'."

224 LENKA KARFIKOVÁ, *Gnadenlehre in Schrift und Patristik*, in: LENKA KARFIKOVÁ (ed.), *Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, Band III Faszikel 5A (1. Teil), Freiburg 2016, 363–389, p. 375, has rightly averred "die trinitarische Struktur der Gnade" and on p. 376 "eine trinitarische Prägung" of grace.

outside the nature of the Father and the Son (τὸ μὴ ἀπεξενώσθαι πάντως τῆς τε τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τῆς τοῦ υἱοῦ φύσεως, *Ref Eun* GNO II. 402,24–25).

*How does Gregory understand the transformation of the baptismal water as a result of consecration?*²²⁵

Because baptism is administered visibly to the body, water is used in baptism. The sanctification that is the result of baptism only takes place if the baptismal water has been transformed by consecration: εἰ μὴ μεταποιηθεῖ διὰ τοῦ ἀγιάσματος (*Maced* GNO III.I. 105,27). This cannot be done without the life-creating Spirit, who is invoked over the water, together with the faith of the baptizand in the Spirit *and* the Son *and* the Father, in whose name baptism is administered.

In his sermon on the feast of the Epiphany, 6 January 383, *Diem Lum*,²²⁶ Gregory speaks at length of the consecration of the baptismal water. The divine power is effective in the healing water of baptism thanks to God's command and the coming of the Spirit over the water. The use of water in addition to the coming of the Spirit is God's concession to the composite nature of human beings, who require a medicine for their visible bodies and their invisible souls: the visible water and the invisible Spirit. It is this Spirit that blesses the body that is baptised, consecrates the water used in baptism, and becomes present to the soul in an unspeakable way. In *Diem lum* GNO IX. 224,17–21, the sacramental character of baptism by consecrated water is explained clearly:

And this gift (sc. of regeneration) it is not the water that bestows (for in that case it were a thing more exalted than all creation), but the command of God, and the visitation of the Spirit that comes sacramentally to set us free. But water serves to express the cleansing.²²⁷

225 The following part on baptism includes parts of my Research Master's thesis, entitled *The Mystery of Regeneration through Water and the Spirit. Gregory of Nyssa's Sermo In Diem Luminum* (A.D. 383): *Baptismal Theology in actu*, Tilburg University 2011, arno.uvt.nl/show.cgi?fid=115237.

226 JUSTIN MOSSAY, *Les fêtes de Noël et d'Épiphanie d'après les sources littéraires Cappado-ciennes du IV^e siècle*, Louvain 1965, 10, assumes on the basis of Gregory of Nazianzus's *Oratio* 40, 24 that Epiphany was, in addition to Easter and Pentecost, a day of baptism after the consecration of the baptismal water in fourth-century Cappadocia. In *Oratio* 39, 17 Gregory of Nazianzus calls the Feast of Lights the high feast of baptism (βαπτίσματος ἡ πανήγυρις). It is quite possible, however, that Gregory of Nyssa's and Gregory of Nazianzus's sermons as they have been handed down to us in fact emphasise the importance of not deferring baptism, because 6 January was the date on which the baptismal candidates presented themselves for baptism at Easter. Gregory of Nyssa appears to refer to this in his sermon *Bapt* of 6 January 381 (GNO X.II. 358,19–23).

227 *Diem lum* GNO IX. 224,17–21: ταύτην δὲ τὴν εὐργεσίαν οὐ τὸ ὕδωρ χαρίζεται (ἦν γὰρ ἂν πάσης τῆς

The use of the word *μυστικῶς* is telling. Precisely in *Diem lum*, but also in other works, Gregory designates baptism with words such *μυστήριον* (*Diem lum* GNO IX. 228,23; *Diem lum* GNO IX. 232 11,15), *μυσταγωγία* (*Diem lum* GNO IX. 234,25), τὸ μυστικὸν βάπτισμα (*Vit Moys* GNO VIII. 73,13), τὸ τῆς παλιγγενεσίας μυστήριον (*Eun* III GNO II. 284,10–11), τὸ τῆς ἀναγεννήσεως ... μυστήριον (*Or cat* GNO III.IV. 82,17).²²⁸ The use of the word ἐπιφοίτησις is similarly telling, as it has an interesting history, which manifests the intimate union between Christ and the Spirit. The baptismal epiclesis is said to have been originally addressed to Christ, as a remembrance of the old liturgical phrase that Paul quotes (1 Cor 16:22): Μαρανα θα; the coming at the baptismal water is simultaneously a kind of *parousia*.²²⁹ In the transitional phase of the development of the baptismal epiclesis, the petition is addressed to Christ that he may bring his Spirit. In a later phase, the Spirit is invoked. There are traces of this transition in the epiclesis in *Diem lum*. At his baptism in the Jordan, Christ brings the Spirit down from on high (πνεῦμα δὲ ἄνωθεν ἀγάγη, *Diem lum* GNO IX. 223,14–15), while a little further on, the consecration of the water takes place through the coming of the Spirit in a mysterious way (*Diem lum* GNO IX. 224,19–20).²³⁰ There is therefore a close coherence between the incarnate Word and the Spirit.

Gregory continues his sermon *Diem lum* GNO IX. 224,27–225,14 as follows:

κτίσεως ὑψηλότερον), ἀλλὰ θεοῦ πρόσταγμα καὶ ἡ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐπιφοίτησις μυστικῶς ἐρχομένη πρὸς τὴν ἡμετέραν ἐλευθερίαν, ὕδωρ δὲ ὑπηρετεῖ πρὸς ἔνδειξιν τῆς καθάρσεως (transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

228 WALTHER VÖLKER, *Gregor von Nyssa als Mystiker*, Wiesbaden 1955, 96 n. 12, mentions a number of *loci* in Gregory's writings.

229 See SEBASTIAN BROCK, The Epiclesis in the Antiochene Baptismal *Ordines*, in: *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* 197 (1974) 183–218 (included in: SEBASTIAN BROCK, *Fire from Heaven. Studies in Syriac Theology and Liturgy*, Aldershot 2006, under no. VII), esp. pp. 213–214.

230 In two other studies, Brock points out that the Greek word ἐπιφοιτάω, which originated in a Greek-speaking Jewish environment, began to be used more frequently from the 4th century onwards to translate the Syrian 'aggen', while ἐπιφοίτησις must be connected with the Syrian 'maggnanuta', the word used to indicate the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, both at the conception (Lk 1:35 ἐπισκίασει) and at the incarnation (Jn 1:14 ἐσκήνωσεν). See SEBASTIAN BROCK, From Annunciation to Pentecost: the Travels of a Technical Term in: *Eulogema. Studies in Honor of Robert Taft SJ*, ed. E. CARR ET AL., Rome 1993, 71–91 (included in: SEBASTIAN BROCK, *Fire from Heaven*, under no. XIII). For the conclusion see pp. 87–89. See also table 3. SEBASTIAN BROCK, Invocations to/for the Holy Spirit in Syriac Liturgical Texts: Some Comparative Approaches, in: *Comparative Liturgy Fifty Years after Anton Baumstark (1872–1948)*, ed. R. TAFT & G. WINKLER (OCA 265), Rome 2001, 377–406 (included in: Sebastian Brock, *Fire from Heaven*, under no. IX) elaborates further on this subject.

‘Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.’ Why are both named, and why is not the Spirit alone accounted sufficient for the completion of baptism? Man, as we know full well, is compound, not simple: and therefore the cognate and similar medicines are assigned for healing to him who is twofold and conglomerate:—for his visible body, water, the sensible element—for his soul, which we cannot see, the Spirit invisible, invoked by faith, present unspeakably. For the Spirit breathes where he wills, and you hear his voice, but cannot tell whence he comes or whither he goes. He blesses the body that is baptized, and the water that baptizes. Despise not, therefore, the divine laver, nor think lightly of it, as a common thing, on account of the use of water. For the power that operates is mighty, and wonderful are the things that are wrought thereby.²³¹

Matter, both things and people, can become filled with God’s power. Gregory speaks of the great power that is at work in the water: τὸ γὰρ ἐνεργοῦν μέγα (*Diem lum* GNO IX. 225,13). If matter can absorb the power of God through the sanctification that comes from the Holy Spirit during the blessing in human language of material things, then it is capable of mediating in the performance of great miracles, Gregory says in the continuation of his sermon *Diem lum* GNO IX. 225,14–25.

The Spirit sanctifies the baptismal water during the blessing spoken in human language. Thanks to this sanctification, the baptismal water has divine and consecratory power for those who, in faith, receive baptism, the baptism in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

How does Gregory understand the activity of the Spirit?

Gregory discusses the activity of the Spirit in baptism: τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ τοῦ πνεύματος (*Maced* GNO III.I. 106,8). The activity of the Spirit is a manifestation of the divine δύναμις, in which the Spirit fully shares.

²³¹ *Diem lum* GNO IX. 224,27–225,14: Ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῇ, φησὶν, ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος, οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ. διὰ τί τὰ δύο καὶ οὐχὶ μόνον τὸ πνεῦμα αὐταρκες ἐνομίσθη πρὸς τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τοῦ βαπτίσματος; σύνθετος ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ οὐχ ἄπλους, ὡς ἀκριβῶς ἐπιστάμεθα, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τῷ διπλῷ καὶ συνεζευγμένῳ τὰ συγγενῇ καὶ ὅμοια φάρμακα πρὸς θεραπείαν ἀπεκληρώθη, σώματι μὲν τῷ φαινομένῳ ὕδωρ τὸ αἰσθητόν, ψυχῇ δὲ τῇ ἀοράτῳ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀφανὲς πίστει καλούμενον, ἀρρήτως παραγίνομενον. Τὸ γὰρ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνεῖ, καὶ τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἀκοῦεις, ἀλλ’ οὐκ οἶδας πόθεν ἔρχεται καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγει. εὐλογεῖ τὸ σῶμα τὸ βαπτιζόμενον καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ τὸ βαπτίζον. διὸ μὴ καταφρονήσης τοῦ θείου λουτροῦ μηδὲ ὡς κοινὸν αὐτὸ ἐξευτελίσης διὰ τὴν χρῆσιν τοῦ ὕδατος· τὸ γὰρ ἐνεργοῦν μέγα καὶ ἀπ’ ἐκείνου θαυμαστὰ γίνεταί τὰ τελούμενα (transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

In *Eust GNO III.I. 7,17–8,3*, Gregory demonstrates that the power of the Spirit, together with the Father and the Son, is inseparable in the life-creating power through which our human nature is transformed from perishable life to imperishability. In an earlier part of *Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–3*, Gregory calls the Father the source of the power, the Son of the Father the power, and the Holy Spirit the spirit of the power, so that he can describe all of nature that was called into being at the creation as an act of the Trinity as beginning with the Father, progressing through the mediation of the Son, and being brought to completion in the Holy Spirit. In this way, in a natural manner, he introduces the Spirit, as the spirit of the power, into the divine δύναμις, and as sharing fully in the one power of creation of God, who is Father and Son and Spirit. By calling the Spirit the spirit of the power, which is the Son, Gregory moreover points to the intimate union between Son and Spirit, as he did in his description of the Son as king and the Spirit as the kingship, the anointing oil with which the king is anointed. The life-creating power of the Spirit is active in the creation *and* in the recreation, the transformation of the perishable life to imperishability. Recreation is an extension of creation.

Gregory clearly sets out the activity of the Spirit in respect of the baptismal water and baptism in his *Or cat*. In *Or cat* chapter XXXIII, Gregory begins his explanation of the baptismal laver as regeneration with the observation that prayer to God, an invocation of heavenly grace, water and faith are the requirements for fulfilling the mystery of regeneration:

εὐχὴ πρὸς θεὸν, καὶ χάριτος οὐρανίας ἐπικλήσις, καὶ ὕδωρ, καὶ πίστις ἐστὶ δι' ὧν τὸ τῆς ἀναγεννήσεως πληροῦται μυστήριον.²³²

Or cat GNO III.IV. 82,15–17

232 EVERETT FERGUSON gives an overview of Gregory's doctrine of baptism in *Or cat* in his article The Doctrine of Baptism in Gregory of Nyssa's *Oratio Catechetica*, in: S. PORTER & A. CROSS (ed.), *Dimensions of Baptism. Biblical and Theological Studies* (Journal for the Study of New Testament, Supplement Series 234), Sheffield 2002, 224–234. He builds on the insights of REINHARD JAKOB KEES, *Die Lehre von der Oikonomia Gottes in der Oratio Catechetica Gregors von Nyssa* (VCS 30), Leiden 1995, 166–182 (= the chapter *Die Taufe als Nachahmung von Tod und Auferstehung Christi—ihre Wirkung und Konsequenzen für das zukünftige Leben*). The eschatological orientation of Gregory's view of baptism has been elegantly demonstrated by ILARIA L.E. RAMELLI in her article Baptism in Gregory of Nyssa's Theology and Its Orientation to Eschatology, in: DAVID HELLMOLM, TOR VEGGE ET AL. (ed.), *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism—Waschungen, Initiation und Taufe—Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity—Spätantike, Frühes Judentum und Frühes Christentum*, II, Berlin 2011, 1204–1231.

This passage includes the significant word ἐπίκλησις. Against those who, through lack of understanding, cannot imagine that the invocation of divine power over the water can make the baptismal laver a source of new life, Gregory points to the gestation of a human being: like the moist sperm is transformed thanks to divine power into the most precious living being, a human being in God's image, so the same divine power will make imperishable what was born in a perishable nature: θείας δυνάμεως παρουσία πρὸς ἀφθαρσίαν μετασκευάζει τὸ ἐν τῇ φθορᾷ φύσει γεγόμενον (*Or cat* GNO III.IV. 84,3–5). In *Or cat* chapter xxxiv we read of the divine power that is invoked in ceremonies. Gregory refers there to what he wrote previously in this work, in chapters xi and xii: God has appeared in human flesh, as Scripture tells us. How this happened transcends our human understanding; all we can do is observe the actions, the ἐνέργειαι, that have proceeded from God's incarnation: πρὸς τὰς ἐνέργειας βλέπῃ (*Or cat* GNO III.IV. 40,8). A few lines further we read:

It is the same with regard to God's manifesting himself in our flesh. The wonders evident in his actions (κατὰ τὰς ἐνέργειας) we regard as sufficient proof of the presence of the Godhead.²³³

In chapter xxxiv Gregory elaborates on this in respect of the invocation:

For when we proved that he who was revealed in the flesh was God, since he disclosed his nature by the miracles he did, we also established that he is present at every procedure where he is invoked.²³⁴

Here, too, Gregory uses the word ἐπίκλησις (*Or cat* GNO III.IV. 84,14). Gregory connects the natural conception of a human being, which does not necessarily require an invocation of God, but which is a manifestation of God's power (failing God's power, no creature could be conceived), with spiritual regeneration, in which God has promised to be present and in which he has promised to invest the power that goes forth from him, when it is invoked to this end in the epiclesis at baptism. The manner in which the Spirit comes during baptism is called unspeakable, although Gregory does not doubt that the Spirit

233 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 40,15–17: οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ διὰ σαρκὸς ἡμῖν φανερωθέντος θεοῦ ἱκανὴν ἀπόδειξιν τῆς ἐπιφανείας τῆς θεότητος τὰ κατὰ τὰς ἐνέργειας θαύματα πεποιήμεθα (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

234 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 84,11–14: δειχθέντος γὰρ τοῦ θεοῦ εἶναι τὸν ἐν σαρκὶ φανερωθέντα τοῖς διὰ τῶν γινομένων θαύμασι τὴν φύσιν ἑαυτοῦ δείξαντα, συναπεδείχθη τὸ παρεῖναι τοῖς γινομένοις αὐτὸν κατὰ πάντα καιρὸν ἐπικλήσεως (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

comes once he is invoked. The ineffability of the 'how' of the Spirit's coming at baptism is part of the ineffability of the 'how' of the incarnation *and* of the 'what' of creation, its essence. In chapter XI of his *Or cat*, Gregory writes that he accepts in faith that the entire corporeal and spiritual reality of the creation has its origin in the incorporeal and uncreated nature, but that he wishes to except from human curiosity the way in which everything is structured, where it comes from and the 'how', because this is wholly ineffable and inexplicable (ἄρρητον παντάπασιν ὄντα καὶ ἀνερμήνευτον, *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 40,6).

In his sermon *Bapt* on the feast of the Epiphany, 6 January 381, Gregory describes the epiclesis as the blessing by the priest (εὐλογίαν τοῦ ၵγιάζοντος ἱερέως, *Bapt* GNO X.II. 363,5–6) which can be pronounced over any quantity of water, as long as this water meets the faith of the baptizand:

He (sc. the Ethiopian eunuch) did not wait for an inn, a city, or a village. He did not wait for a place of sanctification, but was convinced in his level-headedness that every place belongs to the Lord of us all, and that every water is suitable to be used for baptism, if at least this water meets the faith of the baptizand and the consecration of the priest who sanctifies this water.²³⁵

The power that works in baptism, is the same power that is active in the creation and that preserves the creation. It is striking that an intimate connection is subsequently made between the incarnation and the sacrament of baptism. The Son of the Father, the source of the power, during his life manifested his own nature through his miracles. It is he who, as the power, invoked together with the Spirit as the spirit of this power, guarantees the presence of God during sacramental acts such as baptism. Can it perhaps also be said that the sacrament of baptism is an extension of the incarnation? Gregory connects the creation and recreation with each other through the incarnation of the Son.

In *Ref Eun*, written in the second half of 383, Gregory goes a step further and explains that it is Christ himself who, in his own baptism in the Jordan, drew the Spirit, who is the spirit of the power which is the Son, to the baptismal water (*Ref Eun* GNO II. 345,7–17):

235 *Bapt* GNO X.II. 363,1–6: οὔτε καταγώγιον ἀναμείνας οὔτε πόλιν ἢ κώμην ἢ τόπον ၵγιάσματος ἐκδεξάμενος, λογισάμενος δὲ σωφρόνως, ὅτι πᾶς τόπος τοῦ κοινοῦ δεσπότης καὶ πᾶν ὕδωρ ἐπιτήδειον εἰς τὴν τοῦ βαπτίσματος χρεῖαν, μόνον ἐὰν εὖρη πίστιν τοῦ λαμβάνοντος καὶ εὐλογίαν τοῦ ၵγιάζοντος ἱερέως.

This is clear in any case, that he (sc. Christ), because we have become flesh and blood, for our sake, as Scripture says, became equal to us and was willing to share in our flesh and blood. Because he wished to transform us from perishable into imperishable by the birth from on high which takes place through water and the Spirit, he himself precedes us in such a birth, because he drew the Holy Spirit to the water through his own baptism, so that he has become the firstborn of all those who are reborn in the Spirit, and so that he can call his brothers those who have gained a share in the birth through water and the Spirit, the birth that is equal to his birth.²³⁶

The efficacy of the baptismal water rests on the certainty that Christ drew the Holy Spirit to the water during his own baptism, which in this way became a salvific act for the salvation of human beings. Through this baptism, Christ as the first-born of humankind, makes them share in the ascent to imperishable life.²³⁷

In his sermon *Diem lum*, the voice of the Father at Jesus' baptism in the Jordan includes the Spirit. Gregory regards the sacrifice of Elijah (cf. 1 Kings 18), who poured water over the logs of wood three times and kindled the fire with water while uttering a prayer, as a prefiguration of belief in the Triune Godhead, and in the redemption that the three divine persons work. At the end of the second exposé (*Diem lum* GNO IX. 230,6–237,22) he subsequently connects Ps LXX 28:3–4 (“The voice of the Lord is over the waters, the voice of the Lord in majesty”) to the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan. He sees this verse as a foretelling of the Father's voice that was heard over the Son during his baptism, for the benefit of the people who heard this voice:

And the inspired David, foretelling also the voice which the Father uttered from heaven upon the Son at his baptism, that he might lead the hearers, who till then had looked upon that low estate of his humanity which was perceptible by their senses, to the dignity of nature that belongs to the

236 *Ref Eun* GNO II. 345,7–17: ἡ τοῦτο πάντως ἐστὶ δῆλον, ὅτι διὰ τὸ γενέσθαι ἡμᾶς αἷμα καὶ σὰρκα, καθὼς φησιν ἡ γραφή, ὁ δι' ἡμᾶς γενόμενος καθ' ἡμᾶς καὶ σαρκὸς καὶ αἵματος κοινωνήσας, μέλλων ἡμᾶς μεταποιεῖν ἐκ τοῦ φθαρτοῦ πρὸς τὸ ἀφθαρτον διὰ τῆς ἄνωθεν γεννήσεως τῆς δι' ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ τοιοῦτου τόκου καθηγήσατο, διὰ τοῦ ἰδίου βαπτίσματος τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα ἐπὶ τὸ ὕδωρ ἐπισπασάμενος, ὥστε πάντων τῶν πνευματικῶς ἀναγεννωμένων πρωτότοκον αὐτὸν γενέσθαι καὶ ἀδελφοὺς ὀνομάσαι τοὺς τῆς ὁμοίας αὐτῷ διὰ τοῦ ὕδατος καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος μετешχιχότας γεννήσεως.

237 For a description of the importance of the baptism of Jesus as the theological basis for the baptism of Christians, see: ROBERT WILKEN, *The Interpretation of the Baptism of Jesus in the Later Fathers*, in: *Studia Patristica* 11 (1972) 268–277.

Godhead, wrote in his book that passage, ‘The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, the voice of the Lord in majesty’ (Ps LXX 28:3–4).²³⁸

The quotation from this passage from this Psalm contains the word (μεγαλοπρέπεια). In view of the fact that Gregory repeatedly identifies the Spirit with the kingship, Gregory believes that the voice of the Father in this quotation also includes the Spirit.

It is through the corporeal, in this case water, provided that it is sanctified by the Spirit of God, that human beings are born again. God’s power and activity cannot be understood by the human mind:

Now by a similar train of reasoning, water also, though it is nothing else than water, renews the man to spiritual regeneration, when the grace from above hallows it.²³⁹

To summarise: never and nowhere can God’s power and God’s activity (ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ δύναμις καὶ ἐνέργεια, *Diem lum* GNO IX. 227,23–24) be understood by the human mind or grasped in rules. God’s power and activity easily call into existence everything they wish, and at the same time conceal for us the most refined knowledge of his activity.

This leads Gregory to quote David in his Ps LXX 103:24:

Hence also the blessed David, applying his mind to the magnificence of creation, and filled with perplexed wonder in his soul, spoke that verse which is sung by all, ‘O Lord, how manifold are your works: in wisdom have you made them all’ (Ps LXX 103:24). The wisdom he perceived: but the art of the wisdom he could not discover.²⁴⁰

238 *Diem lum* GNO IX. 237,13–19: ὁ δὲ θεσπέσιος Δαβὶδ καὶ τὴν φωνὴν προφητεύων, ἣν ἐξ οὐρανῶν ὁ πατὴρ ἐπαφῆκε τῷ υἱῷ βαπτιζομένῳ, ἵνα πρὸς τὸ φυσικὸν τῆς θεότητος ἀξίωμα τοὺς ἀκούοντας ὁδηγήσῃ πρὸς τὴν αἰσθητὴν τέως τὴν κατὰ τὸν ἄνθρωπον εὐτέλειαν βλέποντας, ἐνέγραψεν ἐκεῖνο τῇ βίβλῳ τὸ: Φωνὴ κυρίου ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων, φωνὴ κυρίου ἐν μεγαλοπρεπείᾳ (transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

239 *Diem lum* GNO IX. 227,4–7: κατὰ δὲ τὴν ὁμοίαν ἀκολουθίαν τῶν λογισμῶν καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ οὐδὲν ἄλλο τυγχάνον ἢ ὕδωρ ἀνακαινίζει τὸν ἄνθρωπον εἰς τὴν νοητὴν ἀναγέννησιν τῆς ἁνωθεν χάριτος εὐλογούσης αὐτὸ (transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

240 *Diem lum* GNO IX. 227,26–228,3: διὸ καὶ ὁ μακάριος Δαβὶδ ἐπιστήσας ποτὲ τὸν νοῦν τῇ μεγαλοπρεπείᾳ τῆς κτίσεως καὶ θαύματος ἀπόρου πληρωθεὶς τὴν ψυχὴν ἐκεῖνο τὸ παρὰ πάντων ἄδόμενον ἀπεφθέγγετο. Ὡς ἐμεγαλύνθη τὰ ἔργα σου κύριε, πάντα ἐν σοφίᾳ ἐποίησας. τὴν μὲν γὰρ σοφίαν ἐνένοήσε, τὴν δὲ τέχνην τῆς σοφίας οὐχ εὔρεν (transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

The Spirit can be at work thanks to his intimate connection with the Son and the Father. We see here how fundamental Gregory's statement in *Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–4* about the Father as the source of the power, the Son as the power, and the Holy Spirit as the spirit of the power actually is. The activity of the Spirit, his ἐνέργεια, over the baptismal water and over the baptizand is a manifestation of the Trinitarian δύναμις, a sign of God's incomprehensible nature.²⁴¹

How does Gregory involve the Father and the Son in the activity of the Spirit?

Immediately after the exposition about the kingship of the three divine persons, he discusses the activity of the Spirit in baptism. Baptism leads to imperishable life, and the Spirit is the one who gives life to the baptizand. Gregory emphasises that the consecration of the water is necessary, because this consecration transforms the water (*Maced GNO III.I. 105,24–27*):

Rather, it is clear to everyone that this is used to minister to the body, though it contributes nothing of its own to sanctification unless it has been transformed by consecration.

In this context Gregory quotes the Lord himself in Jn 6:63: Τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστὶ τὸ ζωοποιοῦν (*Maced GNO III.I. 105,29–30*). This requires faith in the Son, who

241 In a paper I wrote for Professor Paul van Geest in 2010 on Gregory of Nazianzus's *Theological Orations*, entitled *De Geest als Gids—Gregorius van Nazianze's benadering van God in zijn Theologische Oraties*, I demonstrated that Gregory of Nyssa's friend Gregory of Nazianzus, in his influential *Theological Orations*, held during his time in Constantinople in 379–381, developed a form of negative theology that, thanks to the gift of baptism, culminates in positive theology, towards the adoration of the Trinity. The conclusion has this: "It is thanks to the sending of the Holy Spirit after Christ's return to the Father that theologians can get to work with the Spirit as their guide. Gregory acknowledges the limitations of the human powers of comprehension, but at the same time he regards these in the light of Scripture and as fertile ground for the activity of the Spirit. It is the Spirit who, in the sacrament of baptism, illuminates the human mind, so that theological discourse, thanks to the Spirit as guide, can develop words and concepts that ever more adequately form an impression of God's salvific action as we know it in Scripture. These words and concepts are expressions of the illumination that the Trinity, through the Spirit, affords to the baptised person, i.e. the human being who, after purification, is illuminated by the divine light of the incomprehensible God, by the Trinity. These words and concepts acquire their full sense once they have aided the baptised and purified human being to move towards adoration of the Trinity on his or her road to deification. Thanks to the incarnation of the Son, a mystagogical road is opened to baptised and purified human beings, along which they are illuminated in the faith, and which leads them to both knowledge and adoration of the Triune God. *Oratio* 29:21 contains Gregory's catchphrase: ἡ γὰρ πίστις τοῦ καθ' ἡμᾶς λόγου πληρώσις—'for faith completes our reasoning'." An analysis of these *Theological Orations* in relation to Gregory of Nyssa's baptismal theology is likely to afford new insights.

points to the Father as the source of life. The life-creating gift that comes from the Father as from a life-giving source, goes through the Son who is the true life, and comes to completion for those who are deemed worthy thanks to the ἐνέργεια of the Spirit. This involves a linear configuration: Father>Son>Spirit:

from him (sc. the Father) the life-giving grace originates, gushing forth with life as if from a spring through the Only-Begotten Son, who is the true life, and is made complete in those who are worthy by the activity of the Spirit (τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ τοῦ πνεύματος ἁγίου).

Maced GNO III.I. 106,5–8

Gregory here develops for baptism the concept he developed before in *Maced* in his description of the unity of action of the three divine persons:

Rather, the Father is the fount of power, the Son is the Father's power (δύναμις), and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of power, whereas the entire creation, as much of it as is sense-perceptible and as much of it as is incorporeal, is the product of the divine power.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–4

Within the divine power, there is a unity of willing and of being. The creation originates from the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Holy Spirit. This again shows a linear configuration: from the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit:

Accordingly, someone might justly call the entire nature that came into being through creation a movement of will, an impulse of intention, and a transmission of power, which begins from the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Holy Spirit.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,7–11

In this way the intimate bond is highlighted between the Son and the Spirit as the power of the Father and the spirit of this power respectively. We have read a clear description by Gregory before of the unity of the divine activity in his work *Abl*, where Gregory demonstrates that every ἐνέργεια of God has its origins in the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Holy Spirit (*Abl* GNO III.I. 47,21–48,4):²⁴²

²⁴² GIULIO MASPERO, *Trinity and Man*, 1–94, has written the important chapter *Nature and*

With regard to the divine nature, on the other hand, it is otherwise. We do not learn that the Father does something on his own, in which the Son does not co-operate. Or again, that the Son acts on his own without the Spirit. Rather does every operation which extends from God to creation and is designated according to our differing conceptions of it have its origin in the Father, proceed through the Son, and reach its completion by the Holy Spirit. It is for this reason that the word for the operation is not divided among the persons involved.²⁴³

The Son and the Father are therefore included in the activity of the Spirit. This conviction has consequences for the 'how' of the unknowable nature of God, a nature that we know only through the activity of the divine persons.

In Gregory's texts there is always the combination of the divine φύσις, δύναμις, ἐνέργεια, ἔργα or θαύματα. The works of God (ἔργα, θαύματα) are the results of God's activities (ἐνέργεια) that testify to his might or power (δύναμις). This leads to the conclusion that the three divine persons have a single nature (φύσις). A common power presupposes a single nature, and common activities equally presuppose one single nature.²⁴⁴

The conclusion is justified that the power that is at work in the baptismal water is none other than the power that comes forth from the Father, is medi-

Action on God's unity of action and the concept of ἐνέργεια as a movement of nature. For an extensive presentation of the ἐνέργεια of the Triune Godhead, see JOHANNES J. VERHEES, Die ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙΑΙ des Pneumas als Beweis für seine Transzendenz in der Argumentation des Gregor von Nyssa, in: *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 45 (1979) 5–31.

243 *Abl* GNO III.1. 47,21–48,4: ἐπὶ δὲ τῆς θείας φύσεως οὐχ οὕτως ἐμάθομεν ὅτι ὁ πατὴρ ποιεῖ τι καθ' ἑαυτόν, οὐ μὴ συνεφάπτεται ὁ υἱός, ἢ πάλιν ὁ υἱὸς ἰδιαζόντως ἐνεργεῖ τι χωρὶς τοῦ πνεύματος, ἀλλὰ πᾶσα ἐνέργεια ἢ θεόθεν ἐπὶ τὴν κτίσιν διήκουσα καὶ κατὰ τὰς πολυτρόπους ἐννοίας ὀνομαζομένη ἐκ πατρὸς ἀφορμάται καὶ διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ πρόεισι καὶ ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ τελειοῦται. διὰ τοῦτο εἰς τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἐνεργούντων τὸ ὄνομα τῆς ἐνεργείας οὐ διασχίζεται (transl. by CYRIL C. RICHARDSON).

244 In his important book *The Power of God—Δύναμις in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology*, Washington 2001, MICHEL BARNES has shown that the shift which Gregory effects from 'common power presupposes a single nature' to 'common activities presuppose a single nature' is connected with the context of the writings in which these arguments are made. The idea of 'common power presupposes a single nature' can be found in the later parts of *Eun*, where the Son is described as the power of God, and where his divinity is established in this way, whereas the idea of 'common activities presuppose a single nature' occurs in the shorter Trinitarian treatises which Barnes calls polemical, such as *Abl* and *Eust*, which focus on establishing the full divinity of the Spirit, following Basil (in his *De Spiritu Sancto*). In these works, the ἐνέργεια of God is associated in particular with the Spirit. The contrast that Barnes suggests is less pronounced if we include Gregory's work *Maced* in the inquiry, which Barnes has not done.

ated by the Son, and is completed in the Spirit, and none other than the power with which the creation came into being and is preserved in being, the power that was manifested in God's incarnation, the power that was manifested in Christ's life, his miracles, his death and resurrection. Precisely this can also explain why Gregory places such great emphasis on the correct faith in the divinity of all three the divine persons that must be confessed when receiving baptism. It is only in the belief that the three divine persons together are involved in the consecration of the baptismal water that the baptizand can be reborn into a share in the divine life of the Trinity. Thus we find here, in the ἐνέργεια of the baptismal water, the *exitus* from Father>Son>Spirit, in combination with the *reditus*, thanks to the sacrament of baptism, from Spirit>Son>Father. This divine life is possible thanks to the transformation of human beings into the archetypal beauty of the beginning, which was made possible thanks to the philanthropy of God. God's Son becomes man, and thus becomes for human beings the image of the invisible God. Human beings reborn in baptism imitate the model of life that is presented to them by God who has become man. Gregory develops his theology of the image in works such as *Perf GNO VIII.I*. 194,14–195,12. It is God's intention that human beings should conform to Christ in and through the Spirit.²⁴⁵

What does baptising in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit achieve?

Baptism gives human beings the imperishable life, that is the life that permits human beings to share in the divine life of the Trinity:

from him the life-giving grace originates, gushing forth with life as if from a spring through the Only-Begotten Son, who is the true life (Jn 14:6), and is made complete in those who are worthy by the activity of the Spirit.

Maced GNO III.I. 106,5–8

This life comes to human beings through baptism, which is only accomplished by pronouncing the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

²⁴⁵ SAMEER YADAV, *The Problem of Perception and the Experience of God. Toward a Theological Empiricism*, Minneapolis 2015, 440, says the following about Gregory's theological empiricism: "Of course, his theological claim is contestable: that a Christian cultivation of our ordinary perceptual capacities to take in and respond to the rational demands of creation opens our eyes (and ears and so on) to that intelligibility as manifesting the intentional activity of God calling us into conformity with Christ by the Spirit."

Before *Maced*, in *Epist v* (probably written in the year 380),²⁴⁶ Gregory had already spoken about the baptismal command of Mt 28:19 as the foundation and the root of the correct and sound faith:

τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον, θεμέλιον εἶναι καὶ ρίζαν τῆς ὀρθῆς καὶ ὑγιαίνουσας πίστεως ὁμολογοῦμεν.

Epist v GNO VIII.II. 32,11–13

In baptism, the life-creating power (ἡ ζωοποιὸς δύναμις, *Epist v* GNO VIII.II. 32,18) of the holy Trinity is at work for those who have been found worthy of this grace through faith (τοῖς μετὰ πίστεως καταξιούμενοις τῆς χάριτος, *Epist v* GNO VIII.II. 32, 20). Here, again, Gregory stresses that all three divine persons are involved in the mystery of rebirth (τὸ μυστήριον ... τῆς ἀναγεννήσεως, *Epist v* GNO VIII.II. 32,24), the fulfilment of life (τὸ τέλειον τῆς ζωῆς, *Epist v* GNO VIII.II. 32,25–26), and the grace of the resurrection (ἡ τῆς ἀναστάσεως χάρις, *Epist v* GNO VIII.II. 32,27–33,1).

In *Diem lum*, Gregory asks (himself) why baptism is not received in silence, but while the three divine persons are invoked. The three divine persons of whom in Gregory's words (*Diem lum* GNO IX. 228,25–229,18):

comes to us both the fact of our present and the fact of our future existence. It may be you are offended, you who contendest boldly against the glory of the Spirit, and that you grudge to the Spirit that veneration where-with he is revered by the godly. Leave off contending with me: resist, if you can, those words of the Lord which gave to men the rule of the baptismal invocation. What says the Lord's command? Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (Mt 28:19). How in the name of the Father? Because He is the primal cause of all things. How in the name of the Son? Because he is the maker of the creation. How in the name of the Holy Ghost? Because he is the power perfecting all. We bow ourselves therefore before the Father, that we may be sanctified: before the Son also we bow, that the same end may be fulfilled: we bow also before the Holy Ghost, that we may be made what he is in fact and in name. There is not a distinction in the sanctification, in the sense that the Father sanctifies more, the Son less, the Holy Spirit in a less degree than the other two. Why then do you divide the three persons into fragments of

²⁴⁶ ANNA M. SILVAS, *Gregory of Nyssa: The Letters*, 136, gives arguments for this dating.

different natures, and make three gods, unlike one to another, while from all thou dost receive one and the same grace?²⁴⁷

This text clearly shows that the sanctification of human beings proceeds in equal measure from the three divine persons equally, and that the three divine persons in equal measure deserve equal worship.

Gregory shows in *Eun* I GNO I. 73,26–74,10 that it is essential for him that the three names of the divine persons as they are mentioned in Christ's baptismal command in Mt 28:19 should be pronounced when fulfilling the baptismal command. He accuses Eunomius of concealing the names of the three divine persons, and instead mentioning the three *different* οὐσίαι of Father, Son, and Spirit, thus revealing clearly that in Eunomius's vision the οὐσίαι of the Son and the Spirit are different from and subordinate to that of the Father. For Gregory, the only things that count are the names "by which the Lord has handed down the mystery (sc. baptism) in which the faith is fulfilled" (δι' ὧν παρέδωκεν ὁ κύριος τὸ μυστήριον ἐν τῇ τελειώσει τῆς πίστεως, GNO I. 74,4–5). He forcefully repeats this a little further on in his work *Eun* I, when he mentions that Paul, when referring to the creation, is silent about the nature of the Spirit, while the Lord handed over the mystery of the knowledge of God (τὸ τῆς θεογνωσίας μυστήριον, GNO I. 120,8) to his disciples saying the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and in his reference to the life-creating power, associates the Holy Spirit with the Father and himself:

When Paul in referring to creation kept silent about the nature of the Spirit, and when the Lord in referring to the livegiving power associated the Holy Spirit with the Father and himself.²⁴⁸

247 *Diem lum* (GNO IX. 228,25–229,18): ἐξ ὧν ἡμῖν καὶ τὸ νῦν εἶναι καὶ τὸ πάλιν ἔσσεσθαι περιγίνε-
ται. τάχα δυσχεραίνεις ὁ πρὸς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ πνεύματος τολμηρῶς μαχόμενος καὶ ζηλοτυπεῖς τὸν
παράκλητον τοῦ σεβάσματος, ᾧ παρὰ τῶν εὐσεβῶν σέβεται· καταλιπὼν δὲ ἐμοὶ συμπλέκεσθαι
ἀντίστηθι ταῖς τοῦ κυρίου φωναῖς, εἰ δύνασαι, αἱ τὴν ἐπικλησιν τοῦ βαπτίσματος τοῖς ἀνθρώποις
ἐνομοθέτησαν. τί δέ φησι τὸ τοῦ δεσπότου παράγγελμα; Βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ
πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος. πῶς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς; ἐπειδὴ ἀρχὴ τῶν
πάντων. πῶς εἰς τὸν υἱόν; ἐπειδὴ δημιουργὸς τῆς κτίσεως. πῶς εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον; ἐπειδὴ
τελειωτικὸν τῶν πάντων. ὑποκύπτομεν οὖν πατρί, ἵνα ἁγιασθῶμεν· ὑποκύπτομεν καὶ υἱῷ, ἵνα
αὐτὸ τοῦτο γένηται· ὑποκύπτομεν καὶ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι, ἵνα τοῦτο γενώμεθα ὅπερ ἐκεῖνό ἐστι καὶ
λέγεται. οὐκ ἔστι τοῦ ἁγιασμοῦ διαφορὰ ὡς πλέον τοῦ πατρὸς ἁγιάζοντος, ἔλαττον δὲ τοῦ υἱοῦ,
ἦττον δὲ τῶν δύο τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος. διὰ τί οὖν τὰς τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις κατακερματίζει εἰς δια-
φόρους φύσεις καὶ τρεῖς ἐργάζηθαι θεοὺς ἀνομοίους ἀλλήλων μίαν παρὰ πάντων καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν χάριν
δεχόμενος; (transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

248 *Eun* I GNO I. 120,14–17: Παύλου μὲν ἐν τῇ μνήμῃ τῆς κτίσεως τὴν τοῦ πνεύματος φύσιν ἀποσι-

In *Ref Eun* GNO II. 314,9–319,15 Gregory develops a full Trinitarian theology that begins with the baptismal command of Mt 28:19. After Gregory has underlined the close connection between revelation, faith, and baptism, he goes on to describe his doctrine of the Trinity in which Christ's redemptive work is included.²⁴⁹

Gregory explains the importance of belief in the three divine persons when receiving baptism in *Or cat* chapter XXXIX (*Or cat* GNO III.IV. 99,13–100,8):²⁵⁰

We are taught in the gospel that there are three Persons and Names (cf. Mt 28:19) through whom believers come to be born. He who is born of the Trinity is born equally of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. For this is how the gospel speaks about the Spirit: 'That which is born of the Spirit is spirit' (Jn 3:6). Paul, moreover, gives birth 'in Christ' (1 Cor 4:15), and the Father is the

γῆσαντος, τοῦ δὲ κυρίου ἐν τῇ μνήμῃ τῆς ζωοποιου δυνάμεως τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ἑαυτῷ συναρμόσαντος (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

- 249 MICHEL J. VAN PARYS, *Exégèse et théologie dans les livres Contre Eunome de Grégoire de Nysse: textes scripturaires controversés et élaboration théologique*, in: MARGUERITE HARL (ed.), *Écriture et culture philosophique dans la pensée de Grégoire de Nysse*, Leiden 1971, 169–196, on pp. 186–193 of the paper he delivered during the (1st) Colloquium in Chevetogne (September 1969), offers an analysis of this part of the text and demonstrates that Gregory, in imitation of his brother Basil, was influenced by Athanasius, Epiphanius of Salamis, Gregory of Nazianzus, and in a certain sense, also by Marcellus of Ancyra, whereas Origen's influence on Gregory's dogmatic exegesis is said to be minimal. Van Parys speaks of "la hardiesse spéculative de sa théologie" (p. 190). In the discussion that followed Van Parys's paper, Gerhard May (on p. 194) responded with the contention that *Eun* represents Gregory's reaction to Basil: "Und zwar versucht Gregor auch hier, die Aussagen seines Bruders zu systematisieren, sie philosophisch auszubauen und sie von der Nähe zu den biblischen Texten auf die ontologische Ebene zu heben. In exegetischer Hinsicht kann dieses Verfahren freilich einen Rückschritt bedeuten." May's comments reveal a particular view of exegesis that regards any attempt to link Biblical exegesis with systematic theology and philosophy as detrimental to exegesis. In fact, however, it is Gregory's strength that, in using philosophy for the benefit of dogmatic theology, he always gives priority to Biblical exegesis, and makes sure that this determines the direction of his philosophical and theological thinking. In his later contribution 'Einige Bemerkungen über das Verhältnis Gregors von Nyssa zu Basilios dem Grossen', in: J. FONTAINE & CH. KANNENGISSER (ed.), *Epektasis. Mélanges patristiques offerts au Cardinal Jean Daniélou*, Beauchesne 1972, 509–515, Gerhard May comments on the influence that Basil exercised over his brother Gregory in the latter's development of his Trinitarian theology, and argues that while both take the baptismal command of Mt 28:19 as their starting point, Gregory gives his own speculative-dogmatic development of this and thus succeeds in designing his own, independent Trinitarian theology.

- 250 On the coherence between *oikonomia* and *theologia* in the *Or cat* see REINHARD J. KEES, *Die Lehre von der Oikonomia Gottes in der Oratio Catechetica Gregors von Nyssa* (VCS 30), Leiden 1995, 91–119.

'Father of all' (cf. Eph 4:6). And here I ask the reader to judge soberly, lest he make himself the offspring of an unstable nature, when he could have that which is unchangeable as the source of his life. For what happens in the sacrament of baptism depends upon the disposition of the heart of him who approaches it. If he confesses that the holy Trinity is uncreated he enters on the life which is unchanging. But if, on a false supposition, he sees a created nature in the Trinity and then is baptized into *that*, he is born once more to a life which is subject to change. For offspring and parents necessarily share the same nature.²⁵¹

This passage similarly reveals the extent to which the efficacy of baptism is dependent on the common activity of the three divine persons *and* of the baptizand's belief in the uncreated Trinity.

In his letter to Heracleianus (*Epist* xxiv), Gregory lucidly links the baptismal command of Mt 28:19 to the Christian way of life. The baptismal command is the central fact of the Christian life. The Christian way of life is distinguished in two ways: by finding the truth in the reliability of the dogmas, and by finding virtuousness of life in obeying God's commandments. Gregory begins his letter to Heracleianus as follows:

The word of *sound faith* (Tit 1.13, 2.2) conveys its strength in simplicity to those who welcome the God-inspired utterances (cf. 2 Tim 3.16) with a good disposition. It has no need of subtle interpretation to assist its truth, since it is able to be grasped and understood in itself from the primary tradition. We received it from the Lord's own voice when he imparted the mystery of *salvation in the washing of regeneration* (Tit 3.5). *Go*, he said, *make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I com-*

251 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 99,13–100,8: ἐπεὶ οὖν ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τὰ τρία παραδέδοται πρόσωπά τε καὶ ὀνόματα δι' ὧν ἡ γέννησις τοῖς πιστεύουσιν γίνεται, γεννᾶται δὲ κατὰ τὸ ἴσον ὁ ἐν τῇ τριάδι γεννώμενος παρὰ πατρός τε καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ πνεύματος ἁγίου (οὕτω γὰρ φησι περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὅτι Τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος πνεῦμά ἐστιν, καὶ ὁ Παῦλος ἐν Χριστῷ γεννᾷ, καὶ ὁ πατήρ πάντων ἐστὶ πατήρ), ἐνταυθα μοι νηφέτω τοῦ ἀκροατοῦ ἡ διάνοια, μὴ τῆς ἀστατούσης φύσεως αὐτὸν ἐκγονον ποιήσῃ, ἐξὸν τὴν ἀτρεπτόν τε καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον ἀρχηγὸν ποιήσασθαι τῆς ἰδίας ζωῆς. κατὰ γὰρ τὴν διάθεσιν τῆς καρδίας τοῦ προσιόντος τῇ οἰκονομίᾳ καὶ τὸ γινόμενον τὴν δύναμιν ἔχει, ὥστε τὸν μὲν ἀκτιστον ὁμολογοῦντα τὴν ἁγίαν τράδα εἰς τὴν ἀτρεπτόν τε καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον εἰσελθεῖν ζωὴν, τὸν δὲ τὴν κτιστὴν φύσιν ἐν τῇ τριάδι διὰ τῆς ἡπατημένης ὑπολήψεως βλέποντα, ἔπειτα ἐν αὐτῇ βαπτιζόμενον, πάλιν τῷ τρεπτῷ τε καὶ ἀλλοιούμενῳ ἐγγεννηθῆναι βίῳ· τῇ γὰρ τῶν γεννώντων φύσει κατ' ἀνάγκην ὁμογενές ἐστὶ καὶ τὸ τικτόμενον (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

manded you (Mt 28.18–20). For by distinguishing two elements in the way of life of Christians, one the moral part and the other the accuracy of the dogmas, he firmly established the saving dogma in the tradition of baptism on the one hand, and commanded that our life be remedied through the keeping of his commandments on the other.²⁵²

Gregory thus deduces from the baptismal command a division in the Christian way of life. The reliability of the dogmas lies in the transmission of baptism, while the virtuousness of the Christian life lies in obedience to Christ's commandments. It was part of Christ's baptismal command that his disciples had to learn to keep his commandments.

In the continuation of *Epist* xxiv, Gregory again expresses the close connection between transmission of the faith, baptism, faith, and worship:

Hence we are baptized as it has been handed down to us, into *Father and Son and Holy Spirit*, and we believe as we are baptized—for it is fitting that our confession be of one voice with our faith—and we give glory as we believe, for it is not natural that worship make war against faith, bus as we believe, so also we give glory.²⁵³

Why is baptism, in which the Spirit plays a crucial role, the turning point in the order of salvation?

In his earlier letter *Epist* v,²⁵⁴ Gregory offered a description of the life-giving power of the Trinity, and his idea in *Maced* of the Father as the source of the power, the Son as the power of the Father, and the Spirit as the spirit of the

252 *Epist* xxiv GNO VIII.II. 75,3–17: 'Ο τῆς ὑγιαίνουσας πίστεως λόγος τοῖς εὐγνωμόνως τὰς θεοπνεύστους φωνὰς παραδεχομένοις ἐν τῇ ἀπλότῃ τὴν ἰσχὺν ἔχει καὶ οὐδεμιὰς λόγου περινοίας εἰς παράστασιν τῆς ἀληθείας προσδεῖται, αὐτόθεν ὦν ληπτὸς καὶ σαφὴς ἐκ τῆς πρώτης παραδόσεως, ἣν ἐκ τῆς τοῦ κυρίου φωνῆς παρελάβομεν ἐν τῷ λουτρῷ τῆς παλιγγενεσίας τὸ τῆς σωτηρίας μυστήριον παραδόντος· Πορευθέντες γάρ, φησί, μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος, διδάσκοντες τηρεῖν πάντα ὅσα ἐνετειλάμην ὑμῖν· διαίρων γὰρ εἰς δύο τὴν τῶν Χριστιανῶν πολιτείαν, εἷς τε τὸ ἡθικὸν μέρος καὶ εἰς τὴν <τῶν> δογμάτων ἀκρίβειαν, τὸ μὲν σωτήριον δόγμα ἐν τῇ τοῦ βαπτίσματος παραδόσει κατησφαλίσατο, τὸν δὲ βίον ἡμῶν διὰ τῆς τηρήσεως τῶν ἐντολῶν αὐτοῦ κατορθοῦσθαι κελεύει (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

253 *Epist* xxiv GNO VIII.II. 77,12–17: βαπτίζομεθα τοίνυν, ὡς παρελάβομεν, εἰς πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν καὶ πνεῦμα ἅγιον· πιστεύομεν δὲ ὡς βαπτίζομεθα—σύμφωνον γάρ εἶναι προσήκει τῇ ὁμολογίᾳ τὴν πίστιν—· δοξάζομεν δὲ ὡς πιστεύομεν—οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔχει φύσιν μάχεσθαι τῇ πίστει τὴν δόξαν, ἀλλ' εἰς ἃ πιστεύομεν, ταῦτα καὶ δοξάζομεν (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

254 In the same period as *Eust*, before 379. Cf. GIULIO MASPERO, *Trinity and Man. Gregory of Nyssa's Ad Ablabium* (VCS 86), Leiden 2007, xxii.

power (*Maced* GNO III.I. 100,1–3) is effectively a variation on this. In *Epist* v, Gregory speaks of the Father as the source of life, the Son as the author of life, and the Holy Spirit as the creator of life:

and we believe in *the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* (1Pet 1,3) who is *the fountain of life* (cf. Ps 35,10), and in *the Only-Begotten Son of the Father* (Jn 3,14, 18) who is the Author of life, as the Apostle says (Acts 3,15), and in the Holy Spirit of God, concerning whom the Lord said, *it is the Spirit who gives life* (Jn 6,40).²⁵⁵

In saving baptism, through faith in the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, we, who are freed from death, are given the gracious gift of imperishability. The one, imperishable life has its source in the God of all, comes to us through the Son, and is effected in the Holy Spirit:

And since the grace of incorruptibility is bestowed on us who are redeemed from death through faith in *Father and Son and Holy Spirit* in saving baptism, as we have said, it follows that, guided by these, we believe that nothing servile, nothing created, nothing unworthy of the majesty of the Father is to be numbered together with him in the Holy Trinity, because the life which comes to us through faith in the Holy Trinity is one, taking its source in the God of all, issuing through the Son, and effected in the Holy Spirit.²⁵⁶

Gregory's conclusion is especially interesting for the part later on in *Maced* about the praise and the glory of the Trinity, when he describes the coherence of baptism, faith, and praise with rhetorical force:

Having this full assurance, therefore, we are baptized as we were commanded, and we believe as we are baptized, and we glorify as we believe;

255 *Epist* v GNO VIII.II. 33,3–8: καὶ πιστεύομεν εἰς τε τὸν πατέρα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅς ἐστιν ἡ πηγὴ τῆς ζωῆς, καὶ εἰς τὸν μονογενῆ υἱὸν τοῦ πατρὸς, ὅς ἐστιν (ὁ) ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ζωῆς, καθά φησιν ὁ ἀπόστολος, καὶ εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ, περὶ οὗ εἶπεν ὁ κύριος ὅτι Τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι τὸ ζωοποιοῦν (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

256 *Epist* v GNO VIII.II. 33,9–17: καὶ ἐπειδὴ τοῖς λυθρωθεῖσιν ἡμῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ θανάτου ἡ χάρις τῆς ἀφθαρσίας διὰ τῆς εἰς πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα πίστεως ἐν τῷ σωτηρίῳ βαπτίσματι, καθὼς εἰρήκαμεν, παράγινεται, ἐκ τούτων οδηγούμενοι οὐδὲν δοῦλον οὐδὲ κτιστὸν οὐδὲ τῆς μεγαλειότητος τοῦ πατρὸς ἀνάξιον τῇ ἀγίᾳ τριάδι συναριθμεῖσθαι πιστεύομεν, ἐπειδὴ μία ἐστὶν ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν ἡ διὰ τῆς εἰς τὴν ἁγίαν τριάδα πίστεως παραγινομένη, ἐκ μὲν τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν ὅλων πηγάζουσα, διὰ δὲ τοῦ υἱοῦ προΐουσα, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι ἐνεργουμένη (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

so that our baptism, our faith, and our doxology echo in one accord: *Father, Son and Holy Spirit* (Mt 28.19).²⁵⁷

In his sermon *Trid spat*, which was pronounced a few years after *Maced*,²⁵⁸ Gregory speaks of baptism in the context of Christ's resurrection. Baptism manifests regeneration, the birth that has come from God and was made possible by Christ's resurrection.²⁵⁹

The reign of life arrived and the power of death was destroyed and there is now another birth, a different living, another kind of life, an elemental change of our very nature. What is the birth? 'Not from bloods nor from a man's will nor from flesh's will, but born from God' (John 1,13). How is that? I will present the grace to you clearly in words: this offspring is conceived through faith, it is brought to light through the rebirth of baptism, its nurse is the Church, it is suckled by instruction, its food is the bread from above, its growing up is elevated conduct. Its marriage is living with wisdom, its children are hopes, its household is the kingdom, its heritage and wealth are luxury in paradise, its end instead of death is eternal life in the blessedness reserved for those who are worthy.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁷ *Epist* V GNO VIII.II 33,17–22: ταύτην οὖν ἔχοντες τὴν πληροφορίαν βαπτίζομεθα μὲν ὡς προσεταχθήμεν, πιστεύομεν δὲ ὡς βαπτίζομεθα, δοξάζομεν δὲ ὡς πιστεύομεν, ὥστε ὁμοφώνως τὸ βάπτισμα καὶ τὴν πίστιν καὶ τὴν δόξαν εἰς πατέρα εἶναι καὶ υἱόν καὶ πνεῦμα ἅγιον (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS). ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, Private Creeds and their Troubled Authors, in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 24 (2016) 465–490, p. 486, has pointed to the importance of the term πληροφορία: "In the forensic context of answering accusations, to give assurance (πληροφορία) is to provide a pledge of one's orthodoxy."

²⁵⁸ HUBERTUS R. DROBNER, *Gregor von Nyssa. Die Drei Tage zwischen Tod und Auferstehung unseres Herrn Jesus Christus, eingeleitet, übersetzt und kommentiert* (Philosophia Patrum V), Leiden 1982, 190–198 (= *Exkurs* 2), regards Easter 386 as the earliest possible date.

²⁵⁹ WALTHER VÖLKER, *Gregor von Nyssa als Mystiker*, Wiesbaden 1955, 99, commented that this text shows that faith, baptism, and Church form an inseparable unity. HUBERTUS R. DROBNER, *Gregor von Nyssa. Die Drei Tage*, 68–70, has discussed this passage, which is written in beautiful Greek, and has called this 'life course of the new human' a hymn to the new life. He has demonstrated the stylistic devices used and explained the images contained in this hymn. A clear overview of Gregory's view of the Church can be found in JOSÉ R. VILAR, Gregory of Nyssa's View of the Church. Status Quaestionis, in: NICU DUMITRAȘCU (ed.), *The Ecumenical Legacy of the Cappadocians* (Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue), New York 2016, 215–233.

²⁶⁰ *Trid spat* GNO IX. 277,21–278,11: ἦλθεν ἡ τῆς ζωῆς βασιλεία καὶ κατελύθη τοῦ θανάτου τὸ κράτος καὶ γέγονεν ἄλλη γέννησις, βίος ἕτερος, ἄλλο ζωῆς εἶδος, αὐτῆς τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν μεταστοιχείωσις. τίς ἡ γέννησις; Οὐκ ἐξ αἱμάτων οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος ἀνδρὸς οὐδὲ ἐκ θελήματος σαρκός, ἀλλ' ἐκ θεοῦ γενομένη. πῶς τοῦτο; σαφὺς σοι παραστήσω διὰ τοῦ λόγου τὴν χάριν· οὗτος ὁ τόκος διὰ

Just as God's power is present in equal measure in the incarnation of the Son and the invocation of the Spirit over the baptismal water, so Christ's death and resurrection are imitated by the baptizands in the triple immersion, which thanks to God's power permits the baptised, washed by the water that cleanses of sin, to share in Christ's resurrection, having followed him in his death.

Baptism is the crucial moment in the new life of human beings born of God. Baptism is the moment of regeneration itself. Baptism as rebirth ensures that human beings come to light again to go their journey towards beatitude, sharing in the divine life.²⁶¹ The church is there to feed the newly-born. Again, this grace is given to those who are worthy: τοῖς ἀξιοῖς (*Trid spat* GNO IX. 278,11).

Who does Gregory mean by those who are found worthy to receive the life-giving gift of grace?

Gregory says that the gracious gift of imperishable life (ἡ ζωτικὴ χάρις, *Maced* GNO III.I. 105,33) is given to those who have been found worthy (τοῖς ἀξιουμένοις, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,8), in baptism in the name of the Father and the Son *and* the Spirit. Baptizands must have belief in the Spirit *and* in the Son *and* in the Father in order to be able to receive the life-giving gift of grace. Divine grace has a Trinitarian structure!²⁶² In apposition to the Spirit who brings the gift of grace to completion, there is διὰ τῆς πίστεως λαμβανόμενον (*Maced* GNO III.I. 105,31–32); belief in the Son must be its foundation: χρὴ τὴν εἰς τὸν κύριον προϋποκεῖσθαι πίστιν (*Maced* GNO III.I. 105,32); belief in the Father precedes it: προηγείσθαι τὴν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς πίστιν (*Maced* GNO III.I. 106,3–4). Only then can the gift of grace be brought to completion in those who have been found worthy.

Later in *Maced*, in his hymnic description of the greatness of the Spirit, Gregory characterises the Spirit as follows:

πίστεως κυοφορεῖται, διὰ τῆς τοῦ βαπτίσματος ἀναγεννήσεως εἰς φῶς ἄγεται, τροφὸς τούτου ἡ ἐκκλησία, μαζὸς τὰ διδάγματα, τροφή ὁ ἄνωθεν ἄρτος, ἡλικίας τελείωσις ἡ ὑψηλὴ πολιτεία, γάμος ἡ τῆς σοφίας συμβίωσις, τέκνα αἱ ἐλπίδες, οἶκος ἡ βασιλεία, κληρὸς καὶ πλοῦτος ἡ ἐν τῷ παραδείσῳ τρυφή, τέλος δὲ ἀντὶ θανάτου ἡ αἰδὶος ζωὴ ἐν τῇ ἀποκειμένῃ τοῖς ἀξιοῖς μακαριότητι (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

261 WOLF-DIETER HAUSCHILD, *Gottes Geist und der Mensch. Studien zur frühchristlichen Pneumatologie*, München 1972, 287–290, has emphasised that baptism causes the indwelling of the Spirit; this indwelling of the Spirit a priori characterises the new being, and is made visible in a reformed way of life. This is the foundation, Hauschild argues (p. 288), upon which Gregory took a stand against the Pneumatomachi.

262 LENKA KARFIKOVÁ, *Gnadenlehre*, 375, speaks of “Die Trinitarische Struktur der Gnade” as a heading for this chapter of *Maced*. On p. 376 she avers “eine trinitarische Prägung” of grace, and specifically of baptism: “Der Vater ist ihre Quelle, der Sohn ihr Vermittler und der Heilige Geist ihr Vollender.”

it fills all things according to the dignity of each (κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἐκάστου) while it remains full; it is with all who are worthy (μετὰ πάντων ὃν τῶν ἀξίων) yet not separated from the Holy Trinity.

Maced GNO III.I. 108,26–28

Almost at the end of *Maced*, Gregory says about the patriarch Abraham that, having been found worthy of the divine epiphany, he called himself dust and ashes (ὁ πατριάρχης ἐποίησε τῆς θείας ἀξιωθεῖς ἐπιφανείας γῆν καὶ σποδὸν ἑαυτὸν προσαγορεύων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 115,13–14). The combination of being found worthy and the baptismal laver can be found in *Bapt* GNO X.II. 363,14–15: ἀξιωθέντα τινὰ τοῦ σωτηρίου λουτροῦ; *Bapt* GNO X.II. 366,28–367,1: ὁ θεὸς ... καταξιώσῃ τῶν μυστηρίων τὸν φιλαμάρτητον; *Bapt* GNO X.II. 367,5–6: τῶν ἴσων ἀξιωθήσεσθαι τοῖς δικαίοις τιμῶν. *Vit Moys* GNO VII.I. 30,15 has οἱ ἀξιούμενοι (which is used alongside οἱ ἄξιοι)²⁶³ as a stand-alone concept (as we encounter it here in *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,8): it is the grace of the priesthood that is given by God to those who have been found worthy. In *Infant* GNO III.II. 74,17–20, Gregory refers to Mt 5:3 and 5:10 to speak about those who have been found worthy to receive the kingdom on account of their righteous actions. In the doxological conclusion of Oratio III of *Beat* GNO VII.II. 109,16–19, Gregory connects being found worthy (in this instance to receive the consolation of the Holy Spirit as the consoler) with the grace that comes from the Lord Jesus Christ:

Comfort comes from partaking of the Comforter, for the gift of comfort is the proper function of the Spirit; of which gift may we be deemed worthy by the grace of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.²⁶⁴

In *Epist* v, the life-giving power comes through baptism from the Holy Trinity to those who have been found worthy to receive the grace of the resurrection and imperishable life through faith:

Therefore, since the power that gives life to those who are reborn from death to eternal life comes from the Holy Trinity upon those who are deemed worthy of the grace through faith, ...²⁶⁵

²⁶³ See the many *loci* in *Lexicon Gregorianum* 1, col. 421c, s.v. ἄξιος.

²⁶⁴ *Beat* III GNO VII.II. 109,16–19: ἡ δὲ παρακλήσις ἐκ τῆς τοῦ παρακλήτου μετουσίας γίνεται· ἰδία γὰρ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐνέργεια ἡ τῆς παρακλήσεως χάρις ἐστίν, ἥς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀξιοθεῖμεν χάριτι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ᾧ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. ἀμήν (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

²⁶⁵ *Epist* v GNO VIII.II. 32,17–20: ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν ἡ ζωοποιὸς δύναμις ἐπὶ τῶν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου πρὸς

We see here the connection between life-creating power, being found worthy, grace, and faith.²⁶⁶

In the continuation of *Maced* GNO III.I. 114,5–21 it will become evident that the dignity of human beings who adore the Spirit is founded on their gift of free will, their προαίρεσις, to God.²⁶⁷ It is precisely the acknowledgement that human beings are unable to add anything to the honour that the Spirit possesses by nature, and that the divine nature transcends human beings, which makes human beings worthy of receiving the gracious gift of imperishable life in baptism. Through this acknowledgement, which occurs in the profession of faith that precedes baptism, and which is made possible thanks to the pre-baptismal anointing, the baptizands, in *sunergeia* with the Spirit, give to the Spirit the opportunity to form them into human beings who reflect the image of God (the *morphosis*), a restoration of the original paradisiacal condition.²⁶⁸

τὴν αἰώνιον ζωὴν ἀναγεννωμένων διὰ τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος παραγίνεται τοῖς μετὰ πίστεως καταξιούμενοις τῆς χάριτος (transl. by ANNA M. SILVAS).

- 266 ALAN S. DUNSTONE, The Meaning of Grace in the Writings of Gregory of Nyssa, in: *Scottish Journal of Theology* 15 (1962) 235–244, has shown that grace, χάρις, is an umbrella term for Gregory: “Grace is for Gregory an umbrella-word. It covers all conceivable aspects of the divine favour to man and its out-working in history.” (p. 244). And human freedom is one of these gifts of grace that God gives! See also my reflection on προαίρεσις, pp. 289–297 ad *Maced* GNO III.I. 114,18–21. LENKA KARFIKOVÁ, Gnadentehre, 365, also calls χάρις an “umbrella-word”, but at the same time points out that it has the connotation of beauty for Gregory.
- 267 GIULIO MASPERO, The Fire, 272–273, speaks of a new interpretation of the relationship between the Spirit and the persons who are worthy of the Spirit. This theme is derived from Origen and was adopted by Basil. *Maced* refines it: all three divine persons are involved in the sanctification of human beings who are found worthy. It is precisely the acknowledgement that one is unworthy, and that the divine nature transcends us and is incomprehensible, that makes any person into a true worshipper.
- 268 See also my analysis of the concept of προαίρεσις in the part *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,24–115,32; ANTHONY MEREDITH, The Pneumatology, 208–209; JOHANNES ROTHER, Gottverähnlichung als Weg zur Gotteinigung, in: HUBERTUS R. DROBNER & ALBERT VICIANO (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 1998* (VCS 52), Leiden 2000, 547: “Zusammenfassend darf man von der Gnadentehre Gregors von Nyssa wohl, ohne fehlzugehen, sagen dass der Hauptton doch auf einer Art Urstandsgnade liegt, die durch Christus und die Taufe wieder zu entfalten möglich geworden ist. Die inneren Möglichkeiten und der freie Wille werden dabei stark betont; daher der starke, auf die moralische Praxis eingestellte Einschlag, wo man oft etwas anderes erwarten würde.”

7 **Gregory's Fourth Response: Beside the Father and the Son the Spirit Deserves Adoration, That Is Supplication for Mercy**

7.1 ***They Who Do Not Confess the Spirit as Being of Divine Nature, Extend Their Blasphemy from the Spirit through the Son to the Father: Our Human Speech and Thinking Can Never Sufficiently Honour God's Dignity (GNO III.1. 106,25–107,28)***

7.1.1 Greek Text

(106,25) "Ὡστε εἰ μικρὸν ὑπολαμβάνουσι τὸ δῶρον οἱ καὶ τῆς ζωῆς ἑαυτῶν ὑβρίζονται καὶ πολέμιοι καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὸ παρεκτικὸν τῆς χάριτος ταύτης ἀτιμάζειν ἐγνώκασι, μὴ λανθάνετ' οὐχ ἐνὶ προσώπῳ τὴν ἀχαριστίαν περιορίζοντες, ἀλλὰ διὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐπὶ τὴν ἁγίαν τριάδα τὴν (106,30) βλασφημίαν ἐκτείνοντες. ὥσπερ γὰρ ἡ χάρις ἀδιασπάστως ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀξίους ῥέουσα φέρεται, οὕτως καὶ ἡ βλασφημία εἰς τὸ (107,1) ἔμπαλιν κατὰ διάδοσιν ἀναλύουσα ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν τῶν ὅλων θεὸν διεξέρχεται. εἰ γὰρ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀθετηθέντος ὁ ἀποστείλας ἡθέτηται, καίτοι πόσον τὸ μέσον, μεταξὺ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καὶ τοῦ ἀποστείλαντος, τί χρὴ λέγειν, (107,5) ἡλίγκην ὑποσημαίνει κατὰκρισιν τοῖς κατατολμῶσι τοῦ πνεύματος; τάχα διὰ τοῦτο ἀσυγχώρητον κρίμα κατὰ τῆς τοιαύτης βλασφημίας παρὰ τοῦ νομοθέτου κεκύρωται, ἐπειδὴ πᾶσα δι' αὐτοῦ ἡ μακαρία τε καὶ θεία φύσις ἐν τῇ προαιρέσει τοῦ βλασφημοῦντος συγκαθυβρίζεται. ὥσπερ γὰρ (107,10) ὁ εὐσεβῶς τὸ πνεῦμα δεξάμενος εἶδεν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ μονογενοῦς τὴν δόξαν, τὸν δὲ υἱὸν ἰδὼν τὴν εἰκόνα εἶδε τοῦ ἀορίστου καὶ διὰ τῆς εἰκόνος ἐνετυπώσατο τῇ γνώσει²⁶⁹ ἑαυτοῦ τὸ ἀρχέτυπον, οὕτω δηλαδὴ καὶ κατεγνωσμένος²⁷⁰ καὶ καταφρονητής, ἐπειδὴ ἀποθρασύνηται τι κατὰ τῆς δόξης (107,15) τοῦ πνεύματος, διὰ τῆς αὐτῆς ἀκολουθίας ἐπὶ τὸν πατέρα διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὴν βλασφημίαν ἐξέτεινεν. οὐκοῦν φοβητέον τοῖς γε νοῦν ἔχουσι μὴ κατατολμᾶν τῆς τοιαύτης θρασυτήτος, ἥς τὸ πέρας παντελὴς ἐστὶν ἀφανισμὸς τοῦ τολμήσαντος· ἀλλ' ὅση δύναμις, ὑψοῦν μὲν τῷ λόγῳ τὸ πνεῦμα, ὑψοῦν δὲ (107,20) καὶ πρὸ τοῦ λόγου κατὰ διάνοιαν· οὐ γὰρ δυνατόν ἐστι συναναβῆναι τῇ διανοίᾳ τὸν λόγον. καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἐπὶ τὸ ἀκρότατον φθάσης τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης δυνάμεως, εἰς ὅσον ὁ ἀνθρώπινος νοῦς ἐξικνεῖται ὕψος καὶ μέγεθος νοημάτων, τότε νόμιζε κάτω εἶναι τῆς ἐπιβαλλούσης ἀξίας κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον ἐν (107,25) τῇ ψαλμῳδίᾳ ὅτι Μετὰ τὸ ὑψῶσαι κύριον τὸν θεὸν ἡμῶν, τότε μόγις προσκυνεῖτε τῷ ὑποποδίῳ τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ· τό τε αἴτιον τῆς ἀκαταλήπτου ἀξίας οὐδὲν ἄλλο φησὶν ἢ ὅτι ἁγίός ἐστιν.

269 I follow ARG here, reading γνώσει with the MSS; Jaeger posited γνώμη.

270 I follow ARG here, reading κατεγνωσμένος (not καταγνωσμένος) with the Burney MS.

7.1.2 Translation

(106,25) Thus, if these insolent and combative people estimate the gift even of their own life to be trivial and therefore are determined to dishonor the giver of this grace, they should not forget that their ingratitude is not limited to one person; rather, they extend their blasphemy through the Holy Spirit to the Holy Trinity. Just as the grace is brought inseparably to those who are worthy, flowing from the Father through the Son and the Spirit, so too the blasphemy, returning in (107) reverse succession, comes to the God of the universe from the Spirit through the Son. If it is true that when a human being is rejected, the one who sent him is also rejected, no matter how much of an interval separates the person and the sender, then it must be asked why it indicates that judgment day is so awful for those who insult the Spirit. Perhaps it is for this reason that the law-giver established an irrevocable judgment against such blasphemy: because by this action the entire blessed and divine nature is treated with contempt in the blasphemer's malicious intent*. (cf. Mt 12:31–32) One who has piously received the Spirit has beheld the glory of the Only-Begotten in the Spirit; having beheld the Son, he has seen the image of the infinite one and through the image has received in his own understanding²⁷¹ the impress of the archetype. In the same way, it is clear that, whenever the one who is prejudiced²⁷² and contemptuous boldly declares something against the Spirit's glory, by the same sequence he has extended his blasphemy to the Father through the Son. Great care is needed, therefore, at least by those who have any sense, so as to avoid audaciously venturing upon such arrogance, the end-result of which is the complete destruction of the audacious one. Rather, to the extent we are capable, we must exalt the Spirit in our speech, and before our speech, exalt it in our thinking. For speech cannot make thinking's ascent together with it. Whenever you reach the height of human capacity, to concepts of the loftiest height and greatest magnitude that the human mind can attain, then you must consider them to be below the surpassing dignity, as is said in the Psalm, after "exalting the Lord our God", even then you barely "worship the footstool under his feet." The reason his dignity is inconceivable, it says, is nothing other than "because he is holy." (Ps LXX 98:5)

7.1.3 Paraphrase

They who refuse to give to the Spirit, as the giver of the life-giving gift of grace, the honour that is due to the divine nature thus extend their blasphemy to

271 ARG: Reading γῶσει with the MSS; Jaeger posited γῶμη.

272 ARG: Reading κατεγνωσμένος (not καταγνωσμένος) with the Burney MS.

the Son and the Father: the sin against the Spirit leads to the destruction of the audacious person. Human beings are bound in their thinking and in their speech to exalt the Spirit, in the awareness that the dignity of the Holy Spirit far surpasses the possibilities of their human thinking and speech.

7.1.4 Sub-questions

What does Gregory accuse those of who disparage the gift of life?

Before Gregory accompanies the pious on their *reditus* to God, he first describes the perverted *reditus* of the blasphemers, who disparage the gift of life and therefore the giver of life. Such people violate their own life and are enemies of it (οἱ καὶ τῆς ζωῆς ἑαυτῶν ὑβρίζονται καὶ πολέμιοι, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,28–29), because in disparaging the gift of life they dishonour the giver of life and refuse him their gratitude. In doing so, they lapse into the very thing of which Gregory was himself accused at the beginning of *Maced* (ἀφορμὴν ἑαυτοῖς παρέχουσι καθ’ ἡμῶν εἰς ἀσεβείας γραφήν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,20–21): blasphemy (βλασφημίαν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,30). Their ingratitude is not limited only to the Holy Spirit, but extends to the Holy Trinity, which, in an attempt to bolster the charge against the blasphemers, is described as “the whole blessed and divine nature” (πάντα ... ἡ μακαρία τε καὶ θεία φύσις, *Maced* GNO III.I. 107,8).²⁷³ This ingratitude goes in the opposite direction to the gift of life, which flows from the Father through the Son and the Spirit to those who are worthy: the blasphemy goes from the Spirit through the Son to the God of all, so that the blasphemers fall in the sin against the Holy Spirit, which leads to an irrevocable condemnation (Mt 12:31–32).

In *Eun* I GNO I. 82,15–18, Gregory begins an inquiry into Eunomius’s argument for considering the Spirit to be subject to the Father and the Son, in the belief that in doing so Eunomius openly commits blasphemy:

but in the case of the Holy Spirit he (sc. Eunomius) utters such open and undisguised blasphemy, saying that he is not aligned with Father and Son, but ‘subjected’ to both, that, so far as I am able, I will examine the argument.²⁷⁴

²⁷³ FRIEDHELM MANN, Zur Wortgruppe MAKAP- in *De Beatitudinibus*, im übrigen Werk Gregors von Nyssa und im *Lexicon Gregorianum*, in: HUBERTUS R. DROBNER & ALBERT VICIANO (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 1998* (VCS 52), Leiden 2000, 331–358, p. 341: a combination Gregory used much to indicate the incomprehensible, eternal, and uncreated nature.

²⁷⁴ *Eun* I GNO I. 82,15–18: περὶ δὲ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐπειδὴ φανερὰ καὶ ἀπαρακάλυπτον χρήται τῇ

In the conclusion of his inquiry, Gregory in *Eun* I GNO I. 84,4–5 describes the judgement that Eunomius is calling down upon himself by considering the Spirit to be subordinate to the Father and the Son, in similar terms as in *Maced*: the inescapable condemnation for blasphemy (τὴν ἄφυκτον κατάκρισιν τῆς βλασφημίας). In his *Ref Eun* GNO II. 368,21–24, Gregory accuses Eunomius of teaching that the Spirit is part of the created world:

Thereupon he (sc. Eunomius) for himself sows the seed of his blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, not with the purpose of glorifying the Son, but to demonstrate to the Holy Spirit his brazen pride.²⁷⁵

His words are testimony to a tongue that takes up quarrel with God (*Ref Eun* GNO II. 369,10–11): ἡ θεόμαχος ... γλώσσα. In the conclusion of his *Ref Eun* GNO II. 397,14–20, Gregory shows that Eunomius did not send his blasphemy against the Holy Spirit into the world on the basis of any passage from Scripture, nor of any succession of probable arguments, thus demonstrating his impiety against the Spirit, an impiety for which there is no justification.²⁷⁶

Eunomius, too, places the Spirit outside the uncreated reality of God, and thus lapses into blasphemy also against the Son and the Father. Gregory's opponents do not accept the full *exitus* of life which is given to humankind as a gift from the Father as the source of the power, through the Son as the power of the Father, in the Spirit as the spirit of the power. They disparage the gift of life, thus revealing their ingratitude to the giver of life, and are left behind in the saving *reditus* to God's infinity and his divine life. They engage in a perverted *reditus* to the Father through the Son, because in their blasphemy against the Spirit they include the Son and the Father.

Gregory discusses the blasphemy against the Spirit immediately after his exposition on baptism, because baptism only opens the way to imperishable life on condition that the baptizand professes his or her faith in the common activity of the Father *and* the Son *and* the Spirit. In the quotation mentioned above from chapter XXXIX of *Or cat*, we read about baptism as a birth. The birth

βλασφημία, λέγων ἀσύντακτον εἶναι πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ, ἀμφοτέροις δὲ ὑποτεταγμένον, ἤδη καθόσον ἂν οἷός τε ᾧ, ἐξετάσω τὸν λόγον (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL, adapted).

275 *Ref Eun* GNO II. 368,21–24: μετὰ ταῦτα δὲ τῆς κατὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος βλασφημίας ἑαυτῷ τὰ σπέρματα καταβάλλει, οὐχ ἵνα τὸν υἱὸν δοξάσῃ, ἀλλ' ἵνα τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ ἐμπαροινήσῃ.

276 Cf. *Ref Eun* GNO II. 397,14–20: ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν οὔτε ἀπὸ τίνος θείας φωνῆς τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐπιθρυλεῖν ἔχει τῷ πνεύματι οὔτε ἐκ τῆς τῶν εἰκότων λογισμῶν ἀκολουθίας ταύτην κατὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος τὴν βλασφημίαν προήκατο, δῆλον ἂν εἴη τοῖς γε νοῦν ἔχουσιν, ὅτι ἀσυνήγορητον ἐκτίθεται κατ' αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀσέβειαν, οὔτε μαρτυρίᾳ τινὶ γραφικῇ οὔτε μὴν ἀκολουθίᾳ λογισμῶν κρατυνομένην.

of the believer takes place in baptism, begotten by the Trinity, begotten equally by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The sanctification of human beings, it transpires, is constituted by their admission into the divine life of the Trinity, that is to say in the unmoving and unchangeable life. Their equal measure of begetting, of sanctifying the baptised person, means that the three divine persons must be acknowledged and honoured in their divinity in equal measure, if baptism is to have its saving effect: sanctification for and admission into the divine life. Doubt as to the divinity of the Spirit and the Son will ultimately lead a person to disparage the gift of the divine life that comes to human beings in baptism.

In the quotation below from *Or cat*, Gregory presents the view of the Spirit as belonging to the created reality as a deluded notion (τῆς ἡπατημένης ὑπολήψεως, *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 100,5), which prevents the baptizands from entering the unchanging life, causing them instead to be reborn in the life that is subject to change:

If he confesses that the holy Trinity is uncreated he enters on the life which is unchanging. But if, on a false supposition, he sees a created nature in the Trinity and then is baptized into *that*, he is born once more to a life which is subject to change.²⁷⁷

In *Maced*, Gregory has much harsher words in store for people who have the audacity to place the Spirit on a lower rank than the Father and the Son. There is no longer any mention of deluded notions about the Spirit, but of blasphemy, the sin against the Holy Spirit. No rebirth into the life that is subject to change, but the total destruction of the audacious person.

What does Gregory ask persons who acknowledge the Spirit as the giver of life to do?

Gregory contrasts the impious who commit blasphemy against the Spirit, and therefore unavoidably extend this through the Son to the Father, thus engaging in a perverted *reditus*, with the persons who piously accept the Spirit (ὁ εὐσεβῶς τὸ πνεῦμα δεξάμενος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 107,10). Such persons have knowledge of the saving *reditus*. They see in the Spirit the glory of the Only-Begotten One, and the Only-Begotten One as the image of the infinite God. Through this

²⁷⁷ *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 100,2–7: ὥστε τὸν μὲν ἄκτιστον ὁμολογοῦντα τὴν ἁγίαν τράδα εἰς τὴν ἄτρεπτόν τε καὶ ἀναλλοίωτον εἰσελθεῖν ζωὴν, τὸν δὲ τὴν κτιστὴν φύσιν ἐν τῇ τριάδι διὰ τῆς ἡπατημένης ὑπολήψεως βλέποντα, ἔπειτα ἐν αὐτῇ βαπτιζόμενον, πάλιν τῷ τρεπτῷ τε καὶ ἀλλοιουμένῳ ἐγγεν-νηθῆναι βίῳ (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

image, human beings can receive the impress of the archetype. The connection that Gregory draws between seeing the glory of the Son (in the Spirit!) and receiving the impress of the archetype is important for the continuation of *Maced*. The impious who do not acknowledge that the Spirit is of God, not only refuse to render honour to the Spirit, but also refrain from inserting themselves into the saving action of God who, in the Spirit, through the image of the Son, offers human beings the opportunity to receive the impress of God's archetype. By analogy with the Trinitarian structure of grace, according to the example of Paul's epistle to the Ephesians 2:18 ("for through Him [sc. Christ] we both [sc. circumcised and uncircumcised] in the one Spirit have free access to the Father", tr. NJB), the response of human beings has a Trinitarian structure. Here the sequence is reversed.²⁷⁸

Perf GNO VIII.I. 194,14–195,5 contains a succinct summary of Gregory's view of human beings as the image of the Image of the Primordial Image.²⁷⁹ This passage shows that the return to God's primordial image is a return to original beauty, a beauty that we recognise (in the Spirit) in the glory of the Son: the *exitus-reditus* in a nutshell.

He, then, who exceeds all knowledge and understanding, who is unspeakable, ineffable and inexplicable, in order to remake you into the image of God, out of love for humankind, himself too became image of the invisible God, so that he, in his own form that he took, might be formed in you, and you, through him, might once again receive the form, the impress of the archetypal beauty, to become what you were from the beginning.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁸ LENKA KARFIKOVÁ, *Gnadenlehre*, 375.

²⁷⁹ GIULIO MASPERO, BAPTISM, in: *BDGN* (2010) 90–92, p. 90, speaks of a theology of the Image (in addition to a theology of the divine names) as one of the fundamental axes of Gregory's theology of the sacraments. In his entry on IMAGE. εἰκόν, in: *BDGN* (2010) 411–415, p. 414, Maspero writes: "The passage (i.e. *Perf* GNO VIII.I. 194,14–195,12) is a remarkable synthesis of the whole of Nyssen's theology, and shows with extreme clarity the movement of *exitus-reditus*: everything moves from the Trinity, in which the Son is the image of the Father, who by love created man in his image and likeness. Because of human infidelity, the Son became incarnate in order to restore us to the beauty of the primordial image in which we were created. The movement starts from the Trinity to return to the Trinity." JOHANNES ZACHHUBER, *Human Nature*, 191, has included this passage (i.e. *Perf* GNO VIII.I. 194,14–196,15) in his sub-chapter 5.1: "The 'humanistic' solution: salvation through imitation of Christ."

²⁸⁰ *Perf* GNO VIII.I. 194,14–195,5: οὗτος τοίνυν ὁ ὑπερέκεινα πάσης γνώσεώς τε καὶ καταλήψεως, ὁ ἀφραστος καὶ ἀνεκλάλητος καὶ ἀνεκδιήγητος, ἵνα σε ποιήσῃ πάλιν εἰκόνα θεοῦ, καὶ αὐτὸς ὑπὸ φιλανθρωπίας ἐγένετο εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, ὥστε τῇ ἰδίᾳ μορφῇ, ἣν ἀνέλαβεν, ἐν σοὶ μορφωθῆναι καὶ σὲ πάλιν δι' ἑαυτοῦ πρὸς τὸν χαρακτῆρα τοῦ ἀρχετύπου συσχηματισθῆναι κάλλους,

In chapter VI of *Or cat*, Gregory gives a clear description of the original beauty that human beings lost through the deceit of the envious Adversary:

Empowered by God's blessing, man held a lofty position. He was appointed to rule over the earth and all the creatures on it. His form was beautiful, for he was created as the image of the archetypal beauty. By nature he was free from passion, for he was a copy of Him who is without passion (ἀπάθεια).²⁸¹ He was full of candor (παρρησία),²⁸² reveling in the direct vision of God. But all this was tinder for the adversary's passionate envy.²⁸³

In *Op hom* chapter V (Migne *Patrologia Graeca* XLIV c. 138), Gregory explains what it means that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God. The divine beauty is reflected in the human soul. God is both beauty itself and the artist who paints a portrait that is a likeness of his beauty on the canvas of the human person. This portrait is painted not with colours, but as a reflection

εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὅπερ ἦς ἐξ ἀρχῆς. HUBERT MERKI, *ΟΜΟΙΩΣΙΣ ΘΕΩΙ—Von der Platonischen Angleichung an Gott zur Gottähnlichkeit bei Gregor von Nyssa*, Freiburg in der Schweiz 1952, 163–164, concludes that the dynamic motif of ὁμοίωσις πρὸς τὸ θεῖον in Gregory's thought corresponds with the more ontic-static concept of εἰκὼν θεοῦ, as both are based on μετοχή to God, and both are used to indicate the status of perfection which human beings have lost as a result of the Fall. By equating these two concepts, Gregory has given the εἰκὼν θεοῦ motif a new dynamism and growth potential.

281 Ἀπάθεια means not only being free of physical suffering, but also being free of disordered passions of the soul. It is the participation of the soul in the divine life. See also RAYMOND WINLING, *Grégoire de Nysse, Discours Catéchétique, texte grec de E. Mühlberg, introduction, traduction et notes* (SC 453), Paris 2000, 167 n. 4; LUCAS F. MATEO-SECO, APÁTHEIA. ἀπάθεια, in: *BDGN* (2010) 51–54; JEAN DANIELÉLOU, *Platonisme & théologie mystique. Doctrine spirituelle de Saint Grégoire de Nysse*, Paris 1954, 92–103.

282 Παρρησία is also a crucially important concept for Gregory. The most characteristic aspect of the freedom of human beings who live in harmony with God. At the Fall, παρρησία turned into αἰσχύνη, shame. The return to the original beauty of the beginning is manifested primarily in the παρρησία which gives Christians the audacity to address God as Father, in the Lord's Prayer (*Or dom* II GNO VII.II. 29,7). See also JEAN DANIELÉLOU, *Platonisme*, 103–115; LUCAS F. MATEO-SECO, PARRÊSIA. Παρρησία, in: *BDGN* (2010) 578–580. Both concepts of ἀπάθεια and παρρησία belong to the new life in Christ specifically because of baptism.

283 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 25,11–19: ἐπειδὴ γὰρ διὰ τῆς θείας εὐλογίας δυναμωθείς ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὑψηλὸς μὲν ἦν τῷ ἀξιώματι (βασιλεύειν γὰρ ἐτάχθη τῆς γῆς τε καὶ τῶν ἐπ' αὐτῆς πάντων), καλὸς δὲ τὸ εἶδος (ἀπεικόνισμα γὰρ τοῦ ἀρχετύπου ἐγεγόνει κάλλους), ἀπαθὴς δὲ τὴν φύσιν (τοῦ γὰρ ἀπαθοῦς μίμημα ἦν), ἀνάπλεως δὲ παρρησίας αὐτῆς κατὰ πρόσωπον τῆς θείας ἐμφανείας κατατρυφῶν, ταῦτα δὲ τῷ ἀντικειμένῳ τοῦ κατὰ τὸν φθόνον πάθους ὑπεκαύματα ἦν (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

of God's beauty (τὸ θεῖον κάλλος) with purity, *apatheia*, blessedness, the condition of being far removed from all evil, and God's love.²⁸⁴

Thanks to God's love for humankind, the Son who became man, as the image of the invisible God, presents the model of life. Human beings, reborn in baptism, conform to this model of life.

Gregory calls on human beings who refuse to turn against the divinity of the Spirit and therefore take part in the saving *reditus* to God, to exalt the Spirit with all their human power, in thinking and subsequently in speaking, *and* simultaneously to consider that human beings are incapable by definition of reaching the height of God's dignity. This adoration, an exaltation of the Spirit, is the first step in the *reditus* that human beings make towards God, so that this, too, shows that the Spirit (and the baptism at which he is present) stands at the intersection of *exitus* and *reditus*. This *reditus* not only has an element of returning, but also an element of ascending: an *anabasis* that becomes visible in the exaltation of the Spirit in thought and speech, which, even if it reaches as high as it possibly can in its adoration, will reach no higher than the footstool under God's feet (τῷ ὑποποδίῳ τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ, *Maced GNO III.I. 107,26*).

It is striking in Gregory's appeal to those who acknowledge the Spirit as the giver of life that he moves almost imperceptibly, with the aid of Ps LXX 98:5, from exaltation of the Spirit (ὑψοῦν μὲν τῷ λόγῳ τὸ πνεῦμα, *Maced GNO III.I. 107,19*) to exaltation of God (Μετὰ τὸ ὑψῶσαι κύριον τὸν θεὸν ἡμῶν, *Maced GNO III.I. 107,25*), whose unimaginable dignity is grounded in His holiness (τὸ τε αἴτιον τῆς ἀκαταλήπτου ἀξίας οὐδὲν ἄλλο φησιν ἢ ὅτι ἅγιός ἐστιν, *Maced GNO III.I. 107,27–28*). This epithet precisely is the epithet that is proper to the Spirit. In *Inscr*²⁸⁵ Gregory uses the same verse from the Psalms to demonstrate the limited human understanding of God's greatness:

But when you have been led by these things (sc. the divine mysteries) to pious knowledge of God, exalt the glory of God to the extent that your mind is capable, knowing that when your understanding has been strained to the uttermost, and has exceeded every imaginable exalted notion about God, then what you have discovered and worship is not the

284 A similar list can be found in Gregory's eulogy for the Empress Flacilla in the year 385. It includes contact with angels, seeing invisible things, participation in God, and the joy that has no end: ἀπάθεια, μακαριότης, κακοῦ παντὸς ἀλλοτριώσις, ἀγγέλων ὁμιλία, τῶν ἀοράτων θεωρία, θεοῦ μετουσία, εὐφροσύνη τέλος οὐκ ἔχουσα, *Flacill GNO IX. 486,13–15*.

285 JEAN REYNARD in the introduction (pp. 13–15) to his critical edition of *Grégoire de Nysse, Sur les Titres des Psaumes* (sc 466), Paris 2002, diverges from previous authors who preferred an earlier dating of *Inscr*, in the second half of the 370s. Reynard argues that it should be dated to the first half of the 380s.

majesty itself of the one who is sought, but *his footstool* (cf. Ps LXX 98:5), which, for this reason, is inferior and is located below. Which our understanding interprets²⁸⁶ by comparing it with the unattainable direct apprehension.²⁸⁷

In the continuation of *Inscr*, with the aid of Ps LXX 56:12 (ὕψωθητι ἐπὶ τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, ὁ θεός, καὶ ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἢ δόξα σου), Gregory connects the exaltation of God with the glory of God, a glory that increases thanks to those who are saved by the faith (ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ δόξα διὰ τῶν σωζομένων ἐκ πίστεως ἐπαυξομένη, *Inscr* GNO V. 158,14–15).

The destination of the *reditus*, the *reditus* itself or the way there, and the mediator (in the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father), correspond with each other in their respective infinity. This explains why the designations often overlap and are not strictly separated according to the precepts of systematic theology.²⁸⁸

286 I am not following the MSS here (διερμηνεύων), nor Jaeger's correction (διερμηνεύον), which was adopted by JACOBUS DONOUGH, the editor of GNO V, but Heine's alternative (διερμηνευουσης, feminine singular genitive).

287 *Inscr* GNO V. 107,8–17: ὑμεῖς δὲ διὰ τούτων ὁδηγηθέντες πρὸς τὴν εὐσεβῆ θεογνωσίαν, ὅσον χωρεῖ ὑμῶν ὁ λογισμός, τοσοῦτον τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δόξαν ὑψώσατε, εἰδότες ὅτι ὅταν ὑπερταθῇ ὑμῶν ἡ διανοία καὶ πᾶσαν παρέλθῃ ὑψηλὴν φαντασίαν ἐν ταῖς περὶ θεοῦ ὑπολήψεσι, τότε τὸ παρ' ὑμῶν εὐρισκόμενον καὶ προσκυνούμενον οὐκ αὐτὴ ἡ μεγαλειότης τοῦ ζητουμένου ἐστίν, ἀλλὰ τὸ ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ, τὸ ὑποβεβηκὸς διὰ τούτου καὶ κάτω κείμενον τῆς διανοίας ἡμῶν συγκρίσει τῆς ἀνεφίκτου καταλήψεως διερμηνευουσης (transl. by RONALD E. HEINE).

288 VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL, *Spuren von Trinitätstheologie in den Hoheliedhomilien Gregors von Nyssa*, in: GIULIO MASPERO & MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS & ILARIA VIGORELLI (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: In Canticum Canticorum. Analytical and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 13th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Rome, 17–20 September 2014)* (VCS 150), Leiden 2018, 180–199, p. 196, asks whether, given the fact that God and Logos are interchangeable in *Cant*, Gregory, in attributing infinity to the essence of God, also attributes infinity to the divine work of salvation, because the end of divine activity is union with God (as Gregory himself indicates at the end of his *Cant* [*Cant* XV GNO VI. 469,6], quoting 1 Cor 15:28): “durch die Annahme der Unendlichkeit und die Verbindung von Weg, Ziel und Mittler ein ontologischer Sonderfall”. Drecoll's hypothesis is that God's essence is then made visible and knowable in Christ's work of salvation, thus circumventing, as it were, the frontier between ontology and salvation history. I wonder, however, whether Drecoll has realised sufficiently that infinity is one of the *alpha privans* concepts.

7.2 *Persons Who Refuse the Spirit Appropriate Honour Have No Knowledge of Their Own Worthlessness and the Inestimable Dignity of the Spirit (GNO III.1. 107,29–108,17)*

7.2.1 Greek Text

(107,29) Εἰ οὖν πᾶν ὑψωμα δυνάμεως ἀνθρωπίνης κάτω τῆς (107,30) μεγαλοπρεπείας τοῦ προσκυνουμένου ἐστί (τοῦτο γὰρ ὁ λόγος διὰ τοῦ ὑποποδίου τῶν ποδῶν ὑπαινίσσεται), τίς ἡ ματαιότης (108,1) τῶν οἰομένων ἔχειν τινὰ δύναμιν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τοσαύτην ὥστε ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς εἶναι τὸ κατ’ ἀξίαν τῆς τιμῆς ὀρίζειν τῇ ἀτιαγῆτῳ φύσει καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τινων τῶν εἰς τιμὴν ἐπινοουμένων ἀνάξιον κρίνειν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ὡς τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτῶν (108,5) μεῖζον δυναμένης ἢ ὅσον χωρεῖ ἡ ἀξία τοῦ πνεύματος; ὦ τῆς ἐλσεινῆς αὐτῶν καὶ τάλαιπῶρου παραπληξίας, τῶν μὴ συνιέντων αὐτοὶ τε τίνες εἰσὶν οἱ ταῦτα διαλεγόμενοι καὶ τί τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ᾧ δι’ ὑπερηφανίας ἑαυτοὺς ἀντεξάγουσιν! τίς <ἄν>²⁸⁹ εἴποι τοῖσδε <τοῖς> λαοῖς ὅτι ἄνθρωποι εἰσι πνεῦμα (108,10) πορευόμενοι καὶ οὐκ ἐπιστρέφον ἐν μήτρᾳ γυναικός, διὰ ῥυπαρᾶς συλλήψεως οἰκοδομούμενοι καὶ εἰς γῆν ῥυπαρὰν πάντες ἀναλυόμενοι, χόρτῳ προσεικασμένην τὴν ζωὴν λαχόντες, οἱ ἐπ’ ὀλίγον διὰ τῆς βιωτικῆς ἀπάτης ἀνθῆσαντες ἄλλιν ἀποξηραίνονται, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος περὶ αὐτοὺς καταρρῦν (108,15) ἀφανίζεται, οὔτε τι ὄντες πρὸ τῆς γενέσεως καὶ εἰς ὃ τι μεταχωρήσουσιν οὐκ ἀκριβῶς ἐπιστάμενοι, τῆς ψυχῆς τὴν ἰδίαν λῆξιν, ἕως ἂν ἐπιμένη τῇ σαρκί, ἀγνοοῦσης; ταῦτα οἱ ἄνθρωποι.

7.2.2 Translation

(107,29) So then, since every summit of human capacity is below the majesty of the one who is worshiped—for this is what the account intimates through “the footstool under his feet”—look at the vanity (108) of these people! They imagine that they possess within themselves a capacity so great that it is within their power to define the rank and honor of the invaluable nature. For this reason, they think themselves able to judge the Holy Spirit unworthy of some of the honors that have been contrived for it, as if their capacity could be greater in any way whatsoever than the dignity of the Spirit!

Oh, their pitiable and miserable insanity! When they discuss these matters, they do not understand either what they are or what the Holy Spirit is, which they in their arrogance set in opposition to themselves! Who should tell these people: they are human beings, a “spirit that proceeds and does not return” (cf. Wisd 16:14), who make their home in their mother’s womb through a filthy con-

289 Jaeger added <ἄν>, in conformity with regular classical Greek. The addition is unnecessary, however, because the potential optative without ἄν, used as in this instance in a question, occurs frequently in Gregory’s works, see GEORGE W.P. HOEY, *The Use of the Optative Mood in the Works of St. Gregory of Nyssa*, Brookland 1930, 10–12.

ception and all of them—all of them!—come forth into a filthy earth, where they get a life that is comparable to grass? After blossoming for a little while in a common illusion, they once again wither, and their flower falls away around them and disappears. They are nothing before their birth nor do they accurately know to what end they will return,^{*290} since the soul is ignorant of its lot as long as it remains in the flesh. This is the state of human beings.

7.2.3 Paraphrase

They who believe they are entitled to limit the honour that is due to the Spirit, place themselves above the Spirit in their impudent pride and have no knowledge of the immeasurable greatness of the Spirit and of their own limited nature as transitory and mortal human beings.

7.2.4 Sub-questions

What does Gregory accuse his opponents of?

Gregory accuses his opponents of being blinded (ἡ ματαιότης, *Maced GNO III.I. 107,31*), of pitiable and miserable folly (τῆς ἐλεεινῆς αὐτῶν καὶ τάλαιπῶρου παραπληξίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,6*), lack of understanding (τῶν μὴ συνιέντων, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,7*) and pride (δι' ὑπερηφανίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,8*). On what grounds is this accusation based? The capacity of these people appears to reach higher than the extent of the Spirit's dignity, as a result of the fact that they do not know their place and oppose the Holy Spirit: this is a manifestation of their pride. It is here that the accusation of pride (δι' ὑπερηφανίας, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,8*) is first made, both cause and effect of the perverted ascent to God. In placing themselves above the Spirit, they make not an ascent to God, an *anabasis*, but a descent into the deepest depths.

In *Vit Moys*, in the part where Gregory discusses the pride of those (Korah, Dathan, and Abiram) who contested the authority of Moses and Aaron (Num 16) and their ill-fated end, Gregory plays with paradoxes. The self-exaltation that results from pride ends in the descent into the netherworld (πέρας ἐστὶ τῆς καθ' ὑπερηφανίαν ἐπάρσεως ἢ εἰς τὸ ὑπόγειον κάθοδος, *Vit Moys GNO VII.I. 129,13–14*). Gregory defines (Num 16:31–35) their pride (τὴν ὑπερηφανίαν, *Vit Moys GNO VII.I. 129, 15*) as a descending ascent (ἄνοδον ἐπὶ τὸ κάτω, *Vit Moys GNO VII.I. 129, 15*), which is a fine example of an oxymoron.²⁹¹ He continues:

290 ARG's translation (*Nor do they accurately know what they are before their birth and to what end they will return*) adapted: *They are nothing before their birth nor do they accurately know to what end they will return.*

291 LOUIS MÉRIDIÉ, *L'influence de la seconde sophistique sur l'oeuvre de Grégoire de Nysse*,

But the truth of the narrative confirms our definition. For if those who elevate themselves above others in some way go downward, as the earth opens a chasm for them, no one should argue with the definition of ‘arrogance’ as ‘an abject fall’.²⁹²

The *reditus*, which, in the preceding part of the text (*Maced* GNO III.I. 107,19–28) turned out to be an *anabasis*, is contrasted with the perverted *reditus*, which turns out to be a *katabasis*. Just as in *Vit Moys* (*Vit Moys* GNO VII.I. 129,13–14) self-exaltation (πέρας ἐστὶ τῆς καθ’ ὑπερηφανίαν ἐπάρσεως) ultimately leads to a descent into the netherworld, so in *Maced* the impudence of those who dare despise the Spirit ultimately leads to the total destruction of these impudent persons (ἥς τὸ πέρας παντελὴς ἐστὶν ἀφανισμὸς τοῦ τολμήσαντος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 107,18). The impudent do not know what human beings are when left to themselves. On the basis of Scriptural quotations Gregory here describes the essence of human beings in the depths of their mortal existence. At the point where *exitus* and *reditus* intersect, baptism is the image of the descent into the grave and of the ascent to the divine life, as Gregory describes in *Or cat*:

But, as we have indicated, we imitate the transcendent power only to the extent that the poverty of our nature permits. Water is poured on us three times and we emerge again from the water (πάλιν ἀναβάντες ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος), thus representing the saving burial and the resurrection which occurred three days later. And what we have in mind is this: that just as it is within our power to be immersed in water and to emerge again (ἀναδύναι), so it was within the power of Him who is Sovereign of all, to go down into death (καταδυεῖς), as we into the water, and to return again to his natural and blessed state.²⁹³

Rennes 1906, 196–206, in his chapter XIII *La Dialectique* discusses oxymorons as sophistically used linguistic forms for which Gregory has a certain preference.

292 *Vit Moys* GNO VII.I. 129,19–23: ἡ δὲ τῶν ἱστορηθέντων ἀλήθεια βεβαιοῖ τὸν ἡμέτερον ὅρον. εἰ γὰρ οἱ ὑπὲρ τοὺς ἄλλους ἑαυτοὺς ἄραντες κάτω που κατεδύσαν χάσματι τῆς γῆς διασχούσης αὐτοῖς, οὐκ ἂν τις καταγνοίη τοῦ ὅρου τοῦ τὴν ὑπερηφανίαν τὴν κατωτάτω πτώσιν εἶναι ὀριζομένου (transl. by ABRAHAM J. MALBERBE & EVERETT FERGUSON).

293 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 89,18–90,5: ἐπεὶ δέ, καθὼς εἴρηται, τοσοῦτον μιμούμεθα τὴν ὑπερέχουσαν δύναμιν ὅσον χωρεῖ ἡμῶν ἡ πτωχεία τῆς φύσεως, τὸ ὕδωρ τρεῖς ἐπιχεάμενοι καὶ πάλιν ἀναβάντες ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος τὴν σωτήριον ταφὴν καὶ ἀνάστασιν τὴν ἐν τριημέρῳ γενομένην τῷ χρόνῳ ὑποκρinoμένθα, τοῦτο λαβόντες κατὰ διάνοιαν ὅτι, ὡς ἡμῖν ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ τὸ ὕδωρ ἐστὶ καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ γενέσθαι καὶ ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάλιν ἀναδύναι, κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον ἐπ’ ἐξουσίας ἦν ὁ τοῦ παντὸς ἔχων

The weakness of our nature, the depth of our mortal existence, is described in evocative terms in *Maced*, using a cocktail of Scriptural quotations. First, Gregory combines in “human beings are a passing breath that proceeds but does not return to the woman’s womb” (ἄνθρωποι εἰσι πνεῦμα πορευόμενον καὶ οὐκ ἐπιστρέφον ἐν μήτρᾳ γυναικός, *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,9–10) Ps LXX 77:39 (καὶ ἐμνήσθη [sc. ὁ θεός] ὅτι σὰρξ εἰσιν, πνεῦμα πορευόμενον καὶ οὐκ ἐπιστρέφον) with Jn 3:4 (μὴ δύναται εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ δεύτερον εἰσελθεῖν). Then he adds a reference to Gen LXX 3:19 (γῆ εἰ καὶ εἰς γῆν ἀπελεύσῃ): “they came about through a sullied conception and will all dissolve again into filthy earth” (διὰ ῥυπαρᾶς συλλήψεως οἰκοδομούμενοι καὶ εἰς γῆν ῥυπαρὰν πάντες ἀναλύόμενοι, *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,10–12). The phrase:

they get a life that is comparable to grass. After blossoming for a little while in a common illusion, they once again wither, and their flower falls away around them and disappears.

Maced GNO III.I. 108,12–15

is a reference to 1 Pet 1:24, which in turn quotes Is 40:6–8:

πᾶσα σὰρξ ὡς χόρτος, καὶ πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῆς ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου· ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος ἐξέπεσεν.

The conclusion:

nor do they accurately know to what end they will return, since the soul is ignorant of its lot as long as it remains in the flesh.

Maced GNO III.I. 108,15–17

brings to a close his reflections on the insignificance of human beings when left to their own devices, in words chosen by Gregory to match his views on the *diastema*. The last three Greek words in the form of an ellipsis are like the blow of a (rhetorical) sledgehammer: ταῦτα οἱ ἄνθρωποι (*Maced* GNO III.I. 108,17); no similarly powerful exclamation had ever been used in Greek literature to characterise human beings in their insignificance. His oration *Mort* is based on his conviction that human beings cannot of themselves have any knowledge of God’s nature, or of their own nature, or indeed of the end to which they will return:

τὴν δεσποτεῖαν, ὡς ἡμεῖς ἐν τῷ ὕδατι, οὕτως ἐκεῖνος ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ καταδυείς, πάλιν ἐπὶ τὴν ἰδίαν ἀναλύειν μακαριότητα (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

O human beings, you do not know precisely, first of all, where you are, and you do not know yet into what state you will pass.²⁹⁴

A forceful description of human life, which inescapably ends in death. At the intersecting point of *Maced*, this description represents the depth from which human beings rise, thanks to the Spirit bestowed upon them in baptism, in their return to God. A return that will ultimately transcend the *diastema*; time and space will lose their validity.²⁹⁵

7.3 *Holy in Nature, the Spirit Shares in the Circle of Glorification within the Divine Trinity (GNO III.1. 108,18–109,15)*

7.3.1 Greek Text

(108,18) Τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον πρῶτον μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν κατα φύσιν ἁγίων ἐκεῖνό ἐστιν ὅπερ ὁ πατήρ, κατὰ φύσιν ἅγιος, (108,20) καὶ ὁ μονογενὴς ὡσαύτως. οὕτω καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. καὶ κατὰ τὸ ζωοποιὸν πάλιν καὶ κατὰ τὸ ἄφθαρτόν τε καὶ ἀναλλοιώτον καὶ αἰδίου, δίκαιον, σοφόν, εὐθές, ἡγεμονικόν, ἀγαθόν, δυνατόν, ἀγαθὸν πάντων παρεκτικόν καὶ πρό γε ἀπάντων αὐτῆς τῆς ζωῆς· πανταχοῦ ὃν καὶ ἐκάστω παρὸν (108,25) καὶ τὴν γῆν πληροῦν καὶ ἐν οὐρανοῖς μένον, ἐν ταῖς ὑπερκοσμίαις δυνάμεσιν ἐκχεόμενον, πάντα πληροῦν κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἐκάστου καὶ αὐτὸ πλήρες μένον, μετὰ πάντων ὃν τῶν ἁγίων, καὶ τῆς ἁγίας τριάδος οὐ χωριζόμενον· αἰεὶ τὰ βᾶθη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐρευνᾷ, αἰεὶ ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβάνει καὶ ἀποστέλλεται καὶ οὐ χωρί-(108,30)ζεται καὶ δοξάζεται καὶ δόξαν ἔχει· ὁ γὰρ ἄλλω δόξαν δίδωσιν, δῆλον ὅτι ἐν ὑπερβαλλούσῃ δόξῃ καταλαμβάνεται. πῶς γὰρ δοξάζει τὸ δόξης ἅμοιρον· ἐὰν μὴ τι φῶς ᾖ, πῶς τὴν τοῦ φωτὸς ἐπιδείξεται χάριν; οὕτως οὐδὲ τὴν δοξαστικὴν δύναμιν (109,1) ἐπιδείξεται, ὃ ἂν μὴ αὐτὸ ᾖ δόξα καὶ τιμὴ καὶ μεγαλωσύνη καὶ μεγαλοπρέπεια. δοξάζει οὖν τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τὸ πνεῦμα. ἀλλ' ὁ εἰπὼν ἄψευδής ἐστι· Τοὺς δοξάζοντάς με δοξάζω· Ἐγὼ σε ἐδόξασα, φησὶ πρὸς τὸν πατέρα ὁ κύριος· (109,5) καὶ πάλιν Δόξασόν με τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον ἀπ' ἀρχῆς παρὰ σοὶ πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι. ἀποκρίνεται ἡ θεία φωνή· Καὶ ἐδόξασα καὶ πάλιν δοξάσω. ὁρᾷς τὴν ἐγκύκλιον τῆς δόξης διὰ τῶν ὁμοίων περιφορᾶν; δοξάζεται ὁ υἱὸς ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος· δοξάζεται ὑπὸ τοῦ υἱοῦ ὁ πατήρ· πάλιν τὴν δόξαν

294 *Mort* GNO IX. 44,6–8: Ὡς ἄνθρωποι, οὐτε ἐν οἷς ἐστε ἀκριβῶς οἴδατε, καὶ εἰς ὅτι μεταχωρήσετε οὕτω ἐπίστασθε.

295 HANS BOERSMA, *Overcoming Time and Space: Gregory of Nyssa's Anagogical Theology*, in: *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 20 (2012) 575–612, acknowledges that time and space are fundamental categories for Gregory to characterise the creaturely aspect of reality, but Gregory argues that in their ascent to God, the *reditus* that human beings make towards their paradisiacal original condition, their eschatological condition, the diastemic reality of time and space ultimately ceases to exist.

(109,10) ἔχει παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱὸς καὶ δόξα τοῦ πνεύματος ὁ μονογενὴς γίνεται· τίνι γὰρ ἐνδοξασθήσεται ὁ πατήρ, εἰ μὴ τῇ ἀληθινῇ τοῦ μονογενοῦς δόξῃ; ἐν τίνι δὲ πάλιν ὁ υἱὸς δοξασθήσεται, εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ μεγαλυσύνῃ τοῦ πνεύματος; οὕτω πάλιν καὶ ἀνακυκλούμενος ὁ λόγος τὸν υἱὸν μὲν δοξάζει διὰ (109,15) τοῦ πνεύματος, διὰ δὲ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸν πατέρα.

7.3.2 Translation

(108,18) But the Holy Spirit, first of all, which comes from those who are holy by nature, is precisely what the Father is, holy by nature, and the Son likewise. So too the Holy Spirit. And, correspondingly, it is “life-giving” (Jn 6:63; 2 Cor 3:6), incorruptible, unchangeable, eternal, “just” (cf. Rom 8:10), “wise” (Ex 31:3, 35:31; Wisd 1:6, 7:7, 7:22; Is 11:2), “righteous” (Ps LXX 50:12), “ruling” (Ps LXX 50:14, 142:10; Jn 16:13), “good” (Ps LXX 142:10), “powerful” (cf. Wisd 5:13, 11:20; Lk 1:35; Acts 10:38; Rom 15:13), the giver of all good things and, above all, of life itself. Though it is everywhere, it is present to each; though it fills the earth, it remains in the heavens; poured out among the supercelestial powers, it fills all things according to the dignity of each while it remains full; it is with all who are worthy yet not separated from the Holy Trinity. It always searches the depths of God (1 Cor 2:10), always receives from the Son (Jn 16:14–15); it is sent forth and not separated; it is glorified and has glory. For what gives glory to another is clearly in possession of an abundance of glory. After all, how will that which lacks glory give glory? If something is not light, how will it display light’s grace? In the same way, (109) that which is not in itself glory, honor, greatness, and majesty will not display the power of glorifying. Now, the Spirit glorifies the Father and the Son. Moreover, he who said “those who glorify me, I will glorify” (1 Sam 2:30) does not lie. “I have glorified you” (Jn 17:4), the Lord says to the Father. And again, “Glorify me with the glory that I had from the beginning from you, before the world began.” (Jn 17:5) The divine voice answers, “Indeed, I have glorified and will again glorify.” (Jn 12:28) Do you see the circle of glorification revolving from like to like? The Son is glorified by the Spirit. The Father is glorified by the Son. Conversely, the Son has glory from the Father and the Only-Begotten becomes the glory of the Spirit. Indeed, in what will the Father be glorified, if not the true glory of the Only-Begotten? Again, in what will the Son be glorified, if not the majesty of the Spirit? Likewise, tracing the circle in reverse order, language glorifies the Son through the Spirit and the Father through the Son.

7.3.3 Paraphrase

Holy by nature, like the Son and the Father, the Spirit shares in the circular course of glorification: the Spirit glorifies the Father and the Son, and is in

turn glorified. Inseparable from the Father and the Son, the Spirit fathoms the depths of God and proceeds to distribute the life-giving gift of grace through the whole creation.

7.3.4 Sub-questions

What part of his argument does Gregory now begin?

After Gregory has demonstrated the insignificance of human beings when they are left to their own devices, he moves definitively to a discussion of (baptised) human beings who are drawn into the dynamic circle of glory within the Trinity. In order to do this, he begins by describing this circle and its Scriptural basis. This circular course makes it possible, so the continuation of *Maced* will show, for human beings to reach their ultimate end, as they are drawn into this circle of glorification, while at the same time acquiring knowledge of the goodness that exists within the Trinity. The *reditus* that is an *anabasis* proceeds from the Spirit through the Son to the Father, from whom the *exitus* began. Ultimately, it transpires that the *exitus/reditus* and the circle of glorification are intimately linked. They are linked in the sense that the *reditus* of human beings to the Father is continued in the participation of human beings in the mutual dynamic glorification of the Trinity.

The basis for this connection between the circle of glorification and the inclusion of human beings in this circle is laid in this part of the text. Gregory argues here for the circle of glorification within the Trinity on the basis of an innovative exegesis of a combination of Scriptural quotations. This is preceded by a hymnic description of the characteristics of the Spirit, which culminates in the statement that the Spirit is glorified and possesses glory (δοξάζεται καὶ δόξαν ἔχει, *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,30).

What is Gregory's main proposition in respect of the Spirit?

The hymnic description of the characteristics of the Spirit that culminates in the intrinsic glory of the Spirit is rooted in the holiness of the Spirit (Ps LXX 50:13, Is 63:10–11; several places in the New Testament), a holiness that the Spirit possesses by nature, just as the Father and the Son are holy by nature (*Maced* GNO III.I. 108,18–20). This attribute places the Holy Spirit on the same level as the Father and the Son; it means that the Spirit belongs to the uncreated reality, separated from creatures by the *diastema* when seen from creation. In *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,24, the Spirit *is* holiness, ἁγιασμός, included in the series of characteristics that the Spirit *is*.

What characteristics belong to the Spirit by virtue of his holiness?

There follows a hymnic description of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit. This hymnic description is reminiscent of that in *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,13–25 and in *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,8–13, where Gregory chooses predicates that manifest the Spirit expressly as sharing in the divine nature: characteristics that are not dependent on human acknowledgement, but that are concomitant with the divine nature.

The first thing that Gregory mentions in this passage as a sign of the holiness of the Spirit is his life-creating power (κατὰ τὸ ζωοποιόν, cf. Jn 6:63, πνεῦμα καὶ ζωή; 2 Cor 3:6, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ). Gregory then elaborates on this life-creating power: the Spirit provides all good things, and before all else, life itself (ἀγαθὸν πάντων παρεκτικὸν καὶ πρό γε ἀπάντων αὐτῆς τῆς ζωῆς, *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,23–24). In the following passage this important epithet of the Spirit, ζωοποιόν, is substantivised as a name of the Spirit (ἀλλὰ τοῦ ζῆν ἀντεχόμενος τὸν ζωοποιὸν ἀτιμάζεις, *Maced* GNO III.I. 109,31–32).²⁹⁶ Almost at the end of the work, *Maced* GNO III.I. 115,25, Gregory makes it clear that this life-creating power proceeds from the Trinity as a whole: εἰς μίαν δύναμιν, μίαν ἀγαθότητα, μίαν ζωοποιὸν ἐξουσίαν, μίαν θεότητα, μίαν ζωὴν πιστεύων.

Gregory preferably and almost exclusively uses παρεκτικόν in *Maced* as a predicate of the divine nature, more specifically of the Holy Spirit, and even more frequently as a substantive metonym for the Spirit.²⁹⁷

Gregory here ascribes the characteristic of imperishability (τὸ ἀφθαρτον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,21) to the Spirit, having in *Maced* GNO III.I. 92,24 declared

²⁹⁶ The Creed of Constantinople of 381 contains the adjective ζωοποιόν as an attribute of the Spirit. Life is the primary characteristic of creation. ANDRÉ DE HALLEUX, *La profession de l'Esprit Saint dans le Symbole de Constantinople*, in: A. DE HALLEUX, *Patrologie et œcuménisme. Recueil d'études*, Leuven 1990, 303–330, p. 325, therefore points to the connotation with the verb ποιέω in Gen LXX 1:1. This is why the translation of *creator of life* for ζωοποιόν is preferable to *giver of life*.

²⁹⁷ In three *loci* outside *Maced*: as a predicate of the divine nature, in combination with ἀγαθὸν, in *Eun* I GNO I. 111,3 (ἀγαθὸν παρεκτικὴ ἢ θεία φύσις). Similarly in *Eccl* II GNO V. 301,11–12 (ὁ γὰρ τῇ φύσει ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἀγαθὸν πάντως παρεκτικὸς γίνεταί); in *Vit Moys* GNO VII.I. 115,11–12, in combination with ζωῆς (ὁ δὲ μὴ ἐστι ζωὴ παρεκτικὸν γενέσθαι ζωῆς φύσιν οὐκ ἔχει). In *Maced*, as a predicate of the divine nature: GNO III.I. 105,16–17 (τοῦτο δὲ μόνῃς τῆς θείας φύσεως ἰδίον ἐστι καὶ ἐξαίρετον τὸ παρεκτικὸν ἀγαθὸν εἶναι) or of the Spirit: GNO III.I. 110,17–18 (σὺ δὲ πεπεισμένος οἶων καὶ ὅσων παρεκτικὸν ἐστι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον). In *Maced* Gregory only uses παρεκτικόν as a substantive metonym for the Holy Spirit: τὸ παρεκτικὸν τῆς ζωῆς (*Maced* GNO III.I. 106,11); τὸ παρεκτικὸν τοῦ χαρίσματος (*Maced* GNO III.I. 106,16); τὸ παρεκτικὸν τῆς χάριτος (*Maced* GNO III.I. 106,26–27); ἀγαθὸν πάντων παρεκτικὸν (*Maced* GNO III.I. 108,23); τὸν τῶν ἀγαθὸν παρεκτικὸν (*Maced* GNO III.I. 109,30–33).

the Spirit to be imperishability itself; given his simplicity, the Spirit does not partake of the characteristics mentioned there, but he *is* those characteristics.

Gregory speaks of the Spirit's characteristic of eternity: *ἀἰδιον* (*Maced GNO III.I. 108,22*); of his wisdom (*σοφόν*, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,22*), his power (*δυνατόν*, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,23*), in repetition of his enumeration in *Maced GNO III.I. 92,13–16* and the subsequent enumeration of characteristics that the Spirit is (*Maced GNO III.I. 92,21–25*).

On one previous occasion, in the list in *Maced GNO III.I. 97,8–13*, he calls the Spirit unchangeable, *ἀναλλοίωτον* (*Maced GNO III.I. 97,9*), like *δικαιον* (*Maced GNO III.I. 97,11*), as a continuation of the *δικαιοσύνη* that the Spirit *is* (*Maced GNO III.I. 92,24*); *εὐθές* (*Maced GNO III.I. 97,11*). In the same list, Gregory mentions *ἡγεμονικόν* (*Maced GNO III.I. 97,11*), which returns again in *Maced GNO III.I. 104,1* when he challenges the idea that the Spirit can be both ruling principle and subordinate.

The 'good' (*ἀγαθόν*, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,23*), a repetition of *ἀγαθότης ἐστί* (*Maced GNO III.I. 92,23*), segues into a description of the Spirit's omnipotence, his omnipresence, his share in the work of salvation in creation, and his participation in the immanence of the Trinity. This part is filled with the paradoxical combination of characteristics that attempt to indicate the incomprehensible activity of this inseparable member of the Holy Trinity using elusive language, language filled with references to Scripture.

The conclusion, immediately before the description of the glory that the Spirit receives, possesses and gives, addresses the place of the Spirit in the Trinity, the fact that he is inseparable from it, his progression in the immanent reality of God, his reception of the Son, and his being sent to creation.

Gregory repeatedly points to the Spirit who in his fullness (*αὐτὸ πλήρες μένον*, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,27*) fulfils the earth (*τὴν γῆν πληροῦν*, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,25*), even all things (*πάντα πληροῦν*, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,26*). It is easy to see an allusion to Acts 2:2–4 in this.

The pouring out among the celestial powers is a striking connection. The New Testament speaks regularly of the Spirit who pours himself out or is poured out, but this is always in connection with the earth, with people, such as in Acts 2:17: *ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος μου ἐπὶ πᾶσαν σάρκα*; Acts 10:45: *καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη ἡ δωρεὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου ἐκκέχυται*; Tit 3:5–6: *διὰ λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας καὶ ἀνακαίνωσεως πνεύματος ἁγίου, οὗ ἐξέχεεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς πλουσίως* (sc. ὁ θεός) *διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν*; Rom 5:5: *ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου τοῦ δοθέντος ἡμῖν*. The celestial powers also belong to God's creation, to the extent even that, according to David, the composer of the Psalms (as Ps LXX 23:7 shows, at least in the view that Gregory held on the basis of the LXX translation), the Son at his incarnation not

only became a human being among human beings, but also descended to the nature of the angels.²⁹⁸

The presence *ad intra* of the Spirit in the Trinity (*Maced* GNO III.I. 108,28–30: τῆς ἀγίας τριάδος οὐ χωριζόμενον; ἀεὶ τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐρευνᾷ; οὐ χωρίζεται) connects effortlessly with the omnipresence of the Spirit among those who have been found worthy, his mission *ad extra* (*Maced* GNO III.I. 108,27: μετὰ πάντων ὁν τῶν ἀξιῶν, 108,29: ἀποστέλλεται).²⁹⁹ A dignity that is wrought first and foremost through baptism, as Gregory describes it in *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,6–8.

In *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,8–13, Gregory places the predicates of the Holy Spirit—predicates that expressly manifest the Spirit as sharing in the divine nature—in an oscillating movement from *ad intra* to *ad extra* and back again *ad intra*. Gregory concludes the enumeration of predicates here with the paradoxical combination of characteristics that manifest the divinity of the Spirit, i.e. his permanent participation in the divine life of the Trinity and his simultaneous and omnipresent work of salvation within creation. The long, hymnic description of these characteristics of the Spirit culminates in the receiving and possessing of divine glory (δοξάζεται καὶ δόξαν ἔχει, *Maced* GNO III.I. 108,30). The catalogue began with the holiness of the Holy Spirit, and concluded with his glory. Holiness and glory enclose the Spirit's characteristics *ad intra* and *ad extra*. Gregory has now made all preparations for the description of the circle of glory to begin.

What does the circle of glory that is described say about the Spirit?

The holiness of the Spirit, sign of his divinity and foundation of the divine characteristics and divine activity of the Spirit that can be deduced from it, culminates in the possessing and receiving of divine glory, and in the giving of glory. Gregory begins his argument about the circle of glory by appealing to his readers' common sense by asking rhetorical questions to which the answer is clear: the Spirit himself is glory by nature, glory with which he glorifies the Father and the Son. The fact that the Spirit glorifies the Father and the Son demonstrates the superabundant glory of the Spirit and thus his honour and majesty and greatness. Then Gregory quotes 1 Sam 2:30 and interprets this verse

298 *Ascens* GNO IX. 326,4–6: οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀνθρωπος γίνεται, ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ ἀκόλουθον πάντως καὶ ἐν ἀγγέλοις γινόμενος πρὸς τὴν ἐκείνων φύσιν ἑαυτὸν συγκατάγει. For the context of this passage and the importance of the LXX translation for Gregory's interpretation, see the informative article by RICHARD W. BISHOP, Gregory's Sermon on the Ascension, in: *Questions Liturgiques* 92 (2011) 252–281, pp. 271–282.

299 VOLKER DRECOLL, *Le substrat biblique*, 143, assumes that Gregory, following Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto* IX 22,33–34, is thinking in this expression of the omnipresence of the Neoplatonic world soul.

from the Old Testament in truly original fashion. He puts words spoken by Yahweh, words that play a role in Yahweh's resistance against the sons of Eli and that point to Yahweh's decision to glorify some people and damn others, in the mouth of the Spirit. Gregory uses this verse in such a way that the Spirit says that he glorifies the Father and the Son, who in turn glorify the Spirit. Gregory apparently has recourse to this curious interpretation of 1 Sam 2:30, because, like Basil in his *De Spiritu Sancto* XVIII 46, he uses Jn 17:4–5 (ἐγὼ σε ἐδόξασα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ... καὶ νῦν δόξασόν με σύ, πάτερ, παρὰ σεαυτῷ τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι παρὰ σοί) and Jn 12:28b (Καὶ ἐδόξασα καὶ πάλιν δοξάσω) as Scriptural foundation for the mutual glorification of the Father and the Son, but is unable to find any other Scriptural proof than 1 Sam 2:30 for the mutual glorification of the Spirit and the Son together with the Father. He gives a curious interpretation of this verse because it suits his argument. Remarkably, Gregory here in *Maced* does not use Jn 16:14 (ἐκεῖνος ἐμὲ δοξάσει, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λήμψεται, καὶ ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν) for the glorification of the Son by the Spirit, as Basil does (*De Spiritu Sancto* XVIII 46,28–30).³⁰⁰ Perhaps Gregory decided not to use this passage because Jn 16:14 refers more to the role of the Spirit in the economy than to his dynamic role within the immanence of the Trinity.³⁰¹ Gregory's attention is obviously focused on the inner-Trinitarian role of the Spirit. In the absence of any clear Scriptural reference to the glorification of the Spirit by the Son, Gregory describes this glorification somewhat cautiously: “the Only Begotten One becomes the glory of the Spirit.” (δόξα τοῦ πνεύματος ὁ μονογενῆς γίνεται, *Maced* GNO III.I. 109,10–11).

Gregory incidentally strengthens his quotation of Jn 17:4–5 in a remarkable and characteristic way by adding ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, thus emphasising that the glory of the Spirit is proper to the Spirit from eternity, and was not given to the Spirit only at the beginning of creation, just before the creation of the world. Yet another indication that Gregory's focus is on the immanence of the Trinity.

The conclusion of this section of the text (*Maced* GNO III.I. 109,13–15) clarifies that the Spirit plays a central role for human beings in providing access to the Trinity: through the Spirit in his majesty, human language glorifies the Son, and through the Son, the Father:

300 Basil provides no Scriptural reference for the glorification of the Spirit by the Son and the Father, but he points to the communion of the Spirit with the Father and the Son, while he advances Mt 12:31 as an argument *e contrario*: the Spirit possesses glory, because the sin against the Spirit is unforgivable: οὕτω δοξάζεται τὸ Πνεῦμα διὰ τῆς πρὸς Πατέρα καὶ Υἱὸν κοινωνίας, καὶ διὰ τῆς τοῦ Μονογενοῦς μαρτυρίας, λέγοντος· « Πᾶσα ἁμαρτία καὶ βλασφημία ἀφεθήσεται ὑμῖν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἡ δὲ τοῦ Πνεύματος βλασφημία οὐκ ἀφεθήσεται. », *De Spiritu Sancto* XVIII 46,32–36.

301 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ, Gregory of Nyssa's Pneumatology in Context, 281.

Likewise, tracing the circle in reverse order, language glorifies the Son through the Spirit and the Father through the Son.

God's creation, to which human language also belongs, is the creaturely participation in the Trinitarian life, the manifestation, the reflection, of God's glory.³⁰²

What term does Gregory use to denote the circle of glory?

With his own exegesis of the Scriptural passage from 1 Sam (1 Sam 2:30), and by quoting the two Scriptural passages from Jn (Jn 17:4–5 and 12:28), Gregory has provided a Scriptural basis for the mutual glorification of the divine persons. This allows him to ask whether the reader is able to see the circle of glory: ὁρᾷς τὴν ἐγκύκλιον τῆς δόξης διὰ τῶν ὁμοίων περιφορᾶν; (*Maced GNO III.I. 109,7–8*).

Gregory here uses the term ἐγκύκλιος περιφορά in combination with δόξα. This combination is Gregory's own and unique choice, and it does not occur in any other Church Father. A more familiar term for the co-inherence of the divine persons, one which became commonplace later, is the Stoic term περιχώρησις, which had a physical connotation for the Stoics. It is unlikely that Gregory avoided this term on account of the fact that it refers to the mixture of material elements,³⁰³ because ἐγκύκλιος περιφορά, too, is a customary term in his cosmology, as a sign of the ever-changing, dynamic nature of things (*Hex GNO IV.I. 41,8* and *64,1*). Gregory compares the mutual glorification within the Trinity to the circular progression in the cosmos. In this comparison, the *tertium comparationis* between the cosmos with its ἐγκύκλιος περιφορά and the circular course of divine glory is the dynamism. Given the *tertium comparationis*, the image of circular progression is not inconsistent with God's immutability. In *Eun* 11

302 DAVID BENTLEY HART, *The Mirror of the Infinite. Gregory of Nyssa on the Vestigia Trinitatis*, in: SARAH COAKLEY (ed.), *Rethinking Gregory of Nyssa*, Oxford 2003 (repr. 2004) (reprinted from: *Modern Theology* 18 [2002] 541–561), 111–131, p. 118, speaks of: “a specular ontology according to which creation is constituted as simply another inflection of an infinite light, receiving God's effulgence as that primordial gift that completes itself in summoning its own return into existence.”

303 Thus DANIEL F. STRAMARA JR., *Gregory's Terminology for Trinitarian Perichoresis*, in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 52 (1998) 257–263, p. 258, who points to *Eun* 1 GNO I. 76,19–23, where Gregory opposes spatial concepts for intelligible and immaterial nature (τὸ δὲ τῇ φύσει νοερὸν τε καὶ ἄϋλον πόρρω τῆς κατὰ τόπον ἐννοίας ὁμολογεῖται, *Eun* GNO I. 76,22–23). MARIUS TELEA, *The Use of the Term Perichoresis in the Trinitarian Dogma According to St. Gregory of Nyssa*, in: NICU DUMITRAȘCU (ed.), *The Ecumenical Legacy of the Cappadocians* (Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue), New York 2016, 235–245, p. 239, follows Stramara. Both scholars take insufficient account of the *tertium comparationis*, the point of comparison.

GNO I. 307,29–308,2 Gregory uses a variant: he speaks of ἀεικινήτου περιφορᾶς and of τὴν ἐγκύκλιον ταύτην περίοδον.

What place does the Spirit occupy within the Trinity?

In a previous part of *Maced*, Gregory equated the Spirit with the kingship and the corresponding anointing. Here he equates the Spirit with divine glory as a (logical) consequence of this. He does so less explicitly than in other works, but still clearly enough, in combination with τιμή, μεγαλωσύνη and μεγαλοπρέπεια (*Maced* GNO III.I. 109,1–2).

The 17th chapter of John's Gospel helps Gregory to equate the Spirit with divine glory, as he shows in his *Antirrh* GNO III.I. 222,1–19. In this text, Gregory very explicitly connects the royal anointing by the Spirit with the notion of the Spirit as the divine glory. That this explicit equation of the Spirit with the divine glory is not self-evident is clear from Gregory's addition: *in our opinion*, κατὰ τὸν ἡμέτερον λόγον (*Antirrh* GNO III.I. 222,13), a testimony to his modesty.³⁰⁴ At the same time, this text shows that the glory that the Spirit is, is not only proper to the Son from all eternity, but, through him, also to human beings who are connected with the Son as a consequence of the history of salvation.

So the text 'one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things' (1 Cor 8.6) applies similarly to him who before all ages was clothed with the glory of the Spirit (for that is what his anointing symbolically means). After the Passion he makes the man whom he has united with him into Christ, making him beautiful with the same chrism. 'Glorify me', he says (it is as if he said 'anoint me'), 'with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.' But that glory that is posited here, existing before the world, before all creation, before all the ages, that glory in which the Only-Begotten God is glorified, is, in our opinion, no other than the glory of the Spirit. For orthodox doctrine teaches that the Holy Trinity alone exists before the ages. 'He who existed before the ages' (Ps LXX 55.19) is what prophecy says of the Father. Of the Only-Begotten, the Apostle says, 'through him the ages came into being' (cf. Heb 1.2). And the glory attributable to the Only-Begotten God, which is posited to exist before all the ages, is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, what belongs to Christ, who was with

304 MARIE-ODILE BOULNOIS, Le cercle des glorifications mutuelles dans la Trinité selon Grégoire de Nysse: de l'innovation exégétique à la fécondité théologique, in: M. CASIN & H. GRILLIER (ed.), *Grégoire de Nysse: La Bible dans la construction de son discours. Actes de Colloque de Paris, 9–10 février 2007*, Paris 2008, 21–40, p. 35: "Grégoire a conscience d'avancer là une identification qui ne va pas de soi, puisqu'il le précise «à notre avis»."

the Father before the world came into being, also belongs, at the end of the ages, to him who is united to Christ.³⁰⁵

The fact that the Spirit is kingship and is the divine glory permits Gregory to develop a symmetrical concept of the Trinity.³⁰⁶ As divine kingship the Spirit binds himself to the Father and the Son. Thus he binds together the Father and the Son, who are both king, *and* binds together the three divine persons, because they give each other divine glory in the circle of glory, into which human beings are drawn through the outpouring of divine life by the Spirit.

In *Eun* I, and in his great commentary on the Song of Songs *Cant*, Gregory clarifies further what the Spirit is and what he is called. In *Eun* I GNO I. 108,6–13 we read:

The Holy Spirit, who has a share with the Father and the Son in the uncreated nature, is again distinguished from them by recognisable features. His feature and mark is quite uniquely to be none of those things which reason envisaged as peculiar to the Father and the Son. To be neither unbegotten nor only begotten, but to be in the mode of constituting a whole (εἶναι δὲ ὅλως),³⁰⁷ provides his special personal difference (sc. his *proprium*) from the others mentioned.³⁰⁸

305 *Antirr* GNO III.I. 222,4–21: διὸ καὶ εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα, λέγεται Χριστὸς ὡσαύτως ὁ πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων τὴν δόξαν τοῦ πνεύματος περιεκείμενος (τοῦτο γὰρ σημαίνει διὰ συμβόλων ἢ χρίσις) καὶ μετὰ τὸ πάθος τὸν ἐνωθέντα αὐτῷ, ἀνθρωπὸν τῷ αὐτῷ χρίσματι καλλωπίσας Χριστὸν ποιεῖ· Δόξασόν με γάρ, φησὶν, ὡσανεὶ χρίσον ἔλεγε, τῇ δόξῃ, ἣν εἶχον παρὰ σοὶ πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι. ἡ δὲ προκόσμιος καὶ πρὸ πάσης κτίσεως καὶ πρὸ πάντων αἰώνων θεωρουμένη δόξα, ἣ ὁ μονογενὴς θεὸς ἐνδοξάζεται, οὐκ ἂν ἄλλη τις εἴη κατὰ τὸν ἡμέτερον λόγον παρὰ τὴν δόξαν τοῦ πνεύματος· μόνην γὰρ προαιώνιον τὴν ἁγίαν τριάδα ὁ τῆς εὐσεβείας παραδίδωσι λόγος. Ὁ ὑπάρχων πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, φησὶ περὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ἡ προφητεία· περὶ δὲ τοῦ μονογενοῦς ὁ ἀπόστολος ὅτι δι' αὐτοῦ οἱ αἰῶνες ἐγένοντο· καὶ δόξα πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων περὶ τὸν μονογενῆ θεὸν θεωρουμένη τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστὶ τὸ ἅγιον. ὅπερ οὖν ἦν τῷ Χριστῷ τῷ πατρὶ ὄντι πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι, τοῦτο καὶ τῷ ἐνωθέντι πρὸς τὸν Χριστὸν ἐπὶ τέλει τῶν αἰώνων γίνεται (transl. by ROBIN ORTON).

306 According to GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 265.

307 I have adapted the translation of εἶναι δὲ ὅλως (*Eun* I GNO I. 108,12). STUART GEORGE HALL translates εἶναι δὲ ὅλως as “but certainly to be”. This is a questionable locus. I have followed the translation by GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 251: “to be in the mode of constituting a whole”. In n. 68 on p. 251, Maspero refers to ANATOLE BAILLY, *Dictionnaire Grec-Français*. Rédigé avec le concours de E. EGGER, édition revue par L. SÉCHAN & P. CHANTRAINE, Paris 2000, 1370, s.v. ὅλως.

308 *Eun* I GNO I. 108,6–13: τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐν τῷ ἀκτίστῳ τῆς φύσεως τὴν κοινωνίαν ἔχον πρὸς υἱὸν καὶ πατέρα τοῖς ἰδίοις ἁπάντων γνωρίσμασιν ἀπ' αὐτῶν διακρίνεται. γνωρίσμα γὰρ αὐτοῦ καὶ σημείον ἐστὶν ἰδιαίτατον τὸ μὴδὲν ἐκείνων εἶναι, ἅπερ ἰδίως τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῷ υἱῷ ὁ λόγος ἐνεθεώ-

The Spirit forges the bond between the Father and the Son, forms the nexus, τὸ συνδετικόν. The following quotation from *Cant* XV GNO VI. 467,2–17 explains what this nexus consists of:

But it would be better to set out the divine statements of the Gospel themselves, word for word: ‘That they may all be one, even as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be one in us (Jn 17:21).’ Now that which holds this unity together is glory, and no one who looks into the matter will deny that ‘glory’ means the Holy Spirit, if account is taken of the Lord’s words; he says, after all, ‘The glory that you have given me, I have given to them (Jn 17:22).’ For the one who truly gave the disciples glory of this order was the one who said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’ He who invested himself with humanity received this glory before the cosmos existed, and when that humanity had been glorified by the Spirit, the further gift of the Spirit’s glory was passed on to the entire heredity [of that humanity], beginning with the disciples. That is why he said, ‘The glory that you have given me, I have given to them, so that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one’ (Jn 17:22–23).³⁰⁹

The divine glory, who is the Spirit, not only binds together the three divine persons, but is also transmitted—thanks to the incarnation of the Son, and the glorification of human nature which this has made possible—to all who share the human nature, thus bringing about the unity of human nature, drawn as it is into the circle of divine glory. There is thus a close connection between God’s immanence and God’s economy.

ρησε. τὸ γὰρ μήτε ἀγεννήτως εἶναι μήτε μονογενῶς, εἶναι δὲ ὅλως, τὴν ἐξαίρετον αὐτοῦ ιδιότητα πρὸς τὰ προειρημένα παρίστησιν (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

309 *Cant* XV GNO VI. 467,2–17: βέλτιον δ’ ἂν εἴη αὐτὰς ἐπὶ λέξεως παραθέσθαι τὰς θείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου φωνάς. “Ἰνα πάντες ἐν ὧσι καθὼς σύ, πάτερ, ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν σοί, ἵνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἡμῖν ἐν ὧσι. τὸ δὲ συνδετικὸν τῆς ἐνότητος ταύτης ἡ δόξα ἐστίν· δόξαν δὲ λέγεσθαι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον οὐκ ἂν τις τῶν ἐπεσκευμένων ἀντίποιτι πρὸς αὐτὰς βλέπων τὰς τοῦ κυρίου φωνάς. Τὴν δόξαν γάρ, φησίν, ἦν ἔδωκάς μοι, ἔδωκα αὐτοῖς. ἔδωκε γὰρ ὡς ἀληθῶς τοῖς μαθηταῖς τοιαύτην δόξαν ὁ εἰπὼν πρὸς αὐτούς· Λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον. ἔλαβε δὲ ταύτην τὴν δόξαν ἦν πάντοτε εἶχε πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι ὁ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν περιβαλλόμενος, ἥς δοξασθείσης διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐπὶ πᾶν τὸ συγγενές ἡ τῆς δόξης τοῦ πνεύματος διάδοσις γίνεται ἀπὸ τῶν μαθητῶν ἀρξαμένη. διὰ τοῦτο φησι· Τὴν δόξαν, ἦν ἔδωκάς μοι, ἔδωκα αὐτοῖς, ἵνα ὧσιν ἐν, καθὼς ἡμεῖς ἐν ἐσμεν· ἐγὼ ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ σύ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα ὧσι τετελειωμένοι εἰς τὸ ἐν (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.). GIULIO MASPERO, *El Espíritu, la Cruz y la Unidad: συνδέω, σύνδεσμος γ συνδετικός en Gregorio de Nisa*, in: *Scripta Theologica* 38 (2006) 445–471, p. 468, calls this text “un vértice de la doctrina trinitaria di Gregorio”.

In *Tunc et ipse* GNO III.II. 21,23–22,16, Christ, in his incarnation and his sending of the Spirit after his resurrection, connects human beings with the Father, thanks to the Spirit as divine glory who creates unity.

‘The glory that you gave me, I have given to them’ (Jn 17:22). I maintain in fact that he here calls the Holy Spirit glory, whom he gave to the disciples through the act of breathing (cf. Jn 20:22), since those who were found divided from each other cannot otherwise be united, unless guided back to the unity of nature by the unity of the Spirit. For, ‘if someone has not the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to him’ (Rom 8:9). But the Spirit is the Glory, as he says in another passage to the Father: ‘Glorify me near you, with the glory that I had near you before the world was’ (Jn 17:5). For the divine Word, who before the world was has the glory of the Father, in the last days became flesh (cf. Jn 1:14); and it was necessary that, due to the union to the Word, also the flesh became that which the Word is. And the flesh becomes it in receiving that which the Word had before the world was. And this was the Holy Spirit. There is no other eternal being but the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Therefore he also says: ‘The glory that you gave me, I have given to them (Jn 17:22), so that by means of it they be united to me and by means of me to you.’³¹⁰

In this text, too, Gregory equates the Holy Spirit with God’s glory, a personal choice on Gregory’s part that occurs nowhere else.³¹¹ The Spirit becomes the

³¹⁰ *Tunc et ipse* GNO III.II. 21,23–22,16: Τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς· δόξαν γὰρ ἐνταῦθα λέγειν αὐτὸν οἶμαι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ὃ ἔδωκε τοῖς μαθηταῖς διὰ τοῦ προσφυσήματος. οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἄλλως ἐνωθῆναι τοὺς ἀπ’ ἀλλήλων διεστηκότας μὴ τῇ ἐνότητι τοῦ πνεύματος συμφυόμενους· Εἰ γὰρ τις πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ οὐκ ἔχει, οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν αὐτοῦ. τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ἡ δόξα ἐστὶ, καθὼς φησιν ἐτέρωθι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα· Δόξασόν με τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς παρὰ σοὶ πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι. ὁ γὰρ θεὸς Λόγος ὁ πρὸ τοῦ κόσμου ἔχων τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς δόξαν, ἐπειδὴ ἐπ’ ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν σὰρξ ἐγένετο, ἔδει [δὲ] καὶ τὴν σάρκα διὰ τῆς πρὸς τὸν Λόγον ἀνακράσεως ἐκεῖνο γενέσθαι ὅπερ ὁ Λόγος ἐστίν· γίνεται δὲ ἐκ τοῦ ἐκεῖνο λαβεῖν ὃ πρὸ τοῦ κόσμου εἶχεν ὁ Λόγος· τοῦτο δὲ ἦν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο προαιώνιον πλὴν πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ καὶ ἁγίου πνεύματος. διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐνταῦθα φησιν ὅτι Τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς, ἵνα δι’ αὐτῆς ἐμοὶ ἐνωθῶσιν καὶ δι’ ἐμοῦ σοί (transl. by MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS, *The Holy Spirit as the “Glory” of Christ. Gregory of Nyssa on John 17:22*, in: NICU DUMITRAȘCU (ed.), *The Ecumenical Legacy of the Cappadocians* (Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue), New York 2016, 254). GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 267, speaks of a logic of pure gratuity in which human beings are permitted to share, and which is of fundamental importance for the correct interpretation of adoration, as the following part of the text will show.

³¹¹ MARIE-ODILE BOULNOIS, *Le cercle des glorifications*, 37–38, speaks of “un coup de force

bond of unity on three levels: within the Trinity, between the Father and the Son; in Christ as the incarnate Son, between the Word and the flesh; between Christ and human beings, and through him, with the Father.³¹²

Can the circle of glory help to describe the Trinity in its unity and diversity?

Within the circle of glory, the Father is the source of the glory, the Son receives the glory, and the Spirit is the glory. Every divine person is simultaneously the glory of the other: the linear and the symmetrical scheme mutually affect each other.³¹³ In the linear scheme, the glory proceeds from the Father to the Son and from the latter to the Spirit, and back from the Spirit who is the glory to the Son, and from the Son to the Father. In the symmetrical scheme, the Spirit occupies the central place. The Spirit is the glory that connects Father and Son. In this circle, each divine person has his own characteristic: from the Father as the source, the glory proceeds to the Son, who receives it and is connected to the Father thanks to the Spirit as the glory, who moves from one to the other and binds the Father and the Son together. A similarity imposes itself with the previous description of the Father as the source of the power, the Son as the power of the Father, and the Holy Spirit as the spirit of the power, on the understanding that the linear nature of the power that was described above is here shown to be a dynamic circle. In this dynamic circle, the glory that goes from one to the other is a metaphysical term for divine unity that can be characterised by the combination of unity and personal distinction: the dynamic circle of glory. A term that is not a mere metaphor, but has a fully metaphysical meaning.³¹⁴

interprétatif". This equation as such does not occur in other Church Fathers, even though Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto* XVIII 46 tends towards it, and Basil speaks in XXVIII 70,11 of κοινωνίαν τῆς δόξης, a divine *communio*. Like in *Antirr* GNO III.I. 222,13 (κατὰ τὸν ἡμέτερον λόγον), in *Tunc et ipse*, too, Gregory sounds a note of caution by adding οἶμαι (*Tunc et ipse* GNO III.II. 22,1). Gregory strengthens his position by not quoting Jn 20:22 (καὶ τοῦτο εἰπὼν ἐνεφύσησεν καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς, Λάβετε πνεῦμα ἅγιον) literally, but by replacing ἐνεφύσησεν by ἔδωκε διὰ τοῦ προσφυσίσματος to create a clearer parallel with Jn 17:22 (τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέδωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς); using the verb διδωμι twice. MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS, *The Holy Spirit as the "Glory" of Christ*. Gregory of Nyssa on John 17:22, in: NICU DUMITRAȘCU (ed.), *The Ecumenical Legacy of the Cappadocians* (Pathways for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue), New York 2016, 247–263, has explored the genesis of this equation and points to the role that Athanasius and Basil played in its history. Gregory deserves credit for bringing this line of thinking to "its most audacious expression, to its most exact and beautiful formulation", p. 256. The unity of nature within the Trinity is derived from the mutual glorification by the three divine persons and leads to a *communio* of the divine persons.

312 MARIE-ODILE BOULNOIS, *Le cercle des glorifications*, 38.

313 GIULIO MASPERO, *The Fire*, 268–269.

314 LEWIS AYRES, *Nicaea and its Legacy*, 279: "It is, however, important to note that pro-

Does the circle of glory have consequences for the baptised person?

Gregory finds his doctrine on the Holy Trinity in condensed form in the baptismal formula of Mt 28:19. This baptismal formula, the administering of baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and the transformation of the baptizand that occurs when this baptismal formula is pronounced and baptism is administered, force open the circle of divine glory and draw the baptizand into this circle.³¹⁵ In baptism, the eternal circle of glory is opened to admit the baptizand who is about to share in the Triune life of God.

In *Eun I GNO I*. 180,10–11, Gregory uses the image of the road there and back, twice the distance (ὥσπερ δέ τινα δίαυλον ἀνακάμπτοντες, *Eun I GNO I*. 180,10–11) to describe the ascent of human beings to the Father in the Spirit through the Son, an ascent that is continued in the progression from the Father through the Son to the Spirit. After he has described the ascent of human thought with the aid of 1 Cor 12:3, he continues with a description of the reverse journey, back to the Spirit:

Then at the high point of divine knowledge, I mean the God over all, as if we were at the turn of a racetrack, we reverse course, running in our mind through things intimately connected and related, and from the Father through the Son we arrive again at the Spirit.³¹⁶

As it turns out, the Spirit is the key figure in the participation by human beings in the divine life. It is the Spirit who permits human beings to share in the divine light. This is why Gregory concludes in the following manner:

but he is perceived as in all perfection exalted to the supreme height with Father and Son, is counted after the Father and the Son, and bestows on all

Nicenes use many other terms for the divine unity, drawn from a variety of (often scriptural) sources, whose metaphysical senses modern readers tend to miss. Thus, for example, terms such as 'light', 'power', and 'glory' should not be read as 'merely metaphorical' simply because modern thought does not accord them any dense or technical description."

³¹⁵ GORDON S. MIKOSKI, Baptism, Trinity, and ecclesial pedagogy in the thought of Gregory of Nyssa, in: *Scottish Journal of Theology* 59 (2006) 175–182, has revealed the connections that exist in Gregory's thinking between the baptismal rite, his doctrine of the Triune Godhead, and his view of the practices of ecclesiastical pedagogy.

³¹⁶ *Eun I GNO I*. 180,10–14: ὥσπερ δέ τινα δίαυλον ἀνακάμπτοντες μετὰ τὸ κεφάλαιον τῆς θεογνωσίας, αὐτὸν λέγω τὸν ἐπὶ πάντων θεόν, διὰ τῶν προσεχῶν τε καὶ οἰκειῶν τῇ διανοίᾳ τρέχοντες ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς διὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα ἀναχωροῦμεν (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

those able to participate an access through himself to the Light envisaged in the Father and the Son.³¹⁷

In any case the baptised person belongs to those who are able to share in it (πάσι τοῖς μετασχέιν δυναμένοις, *Eun I GNO I*. 181,11). The baptised are counted among the disciples of Jesus who are accepted into the divine life of the Triune Godhead and who thus share in the circle of glory.³¹⁸ The baptised also worship the Holy Spirit so that their orthodox faith, that is: their belief in the divinity of the Son and the Spirit, will ensure that they become what the Spirit is and is called: the glory of God. The comment contained in the passage from *Cant* quoted above is intriguing:

He (sc. the Son) who invested himself with humanity received this glory before the cosmos existed, and when that humanity had been glorified by

317 *Eun I GNO I*. 181,8–11: ἀλλὰ πάσῃ τελειότητι πρὸς τὸ ἀκρότατον ἐπήρμενον μετὰ πατρός καὶ υἱοῦ θεωρεῖται, μετὰ πατέρα καὶ υἱὸν ἀριθμεῖται, καὶ δι' ἑαυτοῦ τὴν προσαγωγὴν πρὸς τὸ ἐπινουούμενον φῶς τὸ ἐν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ πᾶσι τοῖς μετασχέιν δυναμένοις χαρίζεται (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

318 NORMAN RUSSELL, *The Doctrine of the Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*, Oxford 2004 (repr. 2006), 232, concludes his discussion of Gregory of Nyssa by saying that Gregory believes that the idea of deification is not adequate to describe the paradoxical union of human beings with God, particularly on account of God's transcendence and unknowability. Gregory of Nyssa instead chooses participation in the divine life: "For him the terminology of participation provides an alternative means of expressing our ever deepening relationship with God through union with his energies, while his nature or essence remains totally beyond our comprehension." On p. 230 Russell writes: "The transformation of human nature effected in Christ marks the beginning of a new glorified humanity in which each one of us can participate." TORSTEIN THEODOR TOLLEFSEN, *The Christocentric Cosmology of St Maximus Confessor*, Oxford 2008, against DAVID L. BALÁS, *Metousia Theou. Man's Participation in God's Perfections According to Gregory of Nyssa*, Rome 1966, (like Norman Russell) retains the distinction that Gregory makes between God's essence and God's activities. Created beings are capable of participating in God's activities without sharing in his essence. On pp. 156–157, Tollefsen shows this on the basis of a passage from Gregory's *Beat VI GNO VII.11* 136,25–148,22: "Blessed the pure of heart, for they shall see God." DAVID BRADSHAW in his contribution on the adaptation by the Cappadocian Fathers of Platonic themes (Plato in the Cappadocian Fathers, in: RYAN C. FOWLER [ed.], *Plato in the Third Sophistic* [Millennium Studies 50], Boston-Berlin 2014, 193–210) discusses the same passage from *Beat* and emphasises the importance of God's image and likeness as the object of contemplation and as the possibility of contemplation of God's beauty for human beings who are pure of heart. He calls this deification; p. 209: "Although Gregory does not here use the term, to 'see God' in this sense is effectively to be deified, for it is to achieve a state in which the very core of one's being consists in the manifestation of the divine beauty."

the Spirit, the further gift of the Spirit's glory was passed on to the entire heredity [of that humanity], beginning with the disciples.³¹⁹

In this text, the disciples of Jesus to whom the baptised belong form the first group to which the glory of the Spirit is transmitted. But this is only the beginning. The glory of the Spirit is transmitted to all who share in the human nature (ἐπὶ πᾶν τὸ συγγενές, *Cant XV GNO VI*. 467,13), thanks to the incarnation of the Son who has clothed himself with human nature.³²⁰ In *Deit fil*, Gregory's discourse from 383, he calls this clothing with human nature by the Son

the descent from the height of his glory to the humility of the flesh.³²¹

Thanks to this descent of the Son, that which was proper to Christ before his incarnation, the glory that the Spirit is, will at the end of time become proper to human beings who are connected with Christ.³²²

In drawing human beings into the circle of divine glory, this eternal circle of glory enters into time: the continuation in salvation history, within the created world.³²³ This continuation of the divine circle of glory in salvation history is the divine dynamism that sets human beings in motion towards the divine glory: their ἐπέκτασις. It is the dynamism of which Paul testifies in his epistle to the Philippians 3:13.³²⁴

319 *Cant XV GNO VI*. 467,10–14: ἔλαβε δὲ ταύτην τὴν δόξαν ἣν πάντοτε εἶχε πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι ὁ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην φύσιν περιβαλλόμενος, ἥς δοξασθείσης διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐπὶ πᾶν τὸ συγγενές ἢ τῆς δόξης τοῦ πνεύματος διάδοσις γίνεται ἀπὸ τῶν μαθητῶν ἀρξαμένη (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

320 SIBBELE DE BOER, *De antropologie van Gregorius van Nyssa*, Assen 1968, focuses in chapter 2 on human beings as frontier dwellers. Sub-chapter 2 A. 3b. (pp. 84–89) is called: *Van δόξα tot δόξα*. God's δόξα is the back frontier and the front frontier.

321 *Deit fil GNO X.II*. 129,5–6: τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕψους τῆς δόξης πρὸς τὸ ταπεινὸν τῆς σαρκὸς ἐνδείκνυται κάθοδον.

322 *Antirr GNO III.I*. 222,17–21: καὶ δόξα πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων περὶ τὸν μονογενῆ θεὸν θεωρουμένη τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστὶ τὸ ἅγιον. ὅπερ οὖν ἦν τῷ Χριστῷ τῷ παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ ὄντι πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι, τοῦτο καὶ τῷ ἐνωθέντι πρὸς τὸν Χριστὸν ἐπὶ τέλει τῶν αἰώνων γίνεται.

323 GEORGIOS D. PANAGOPOULOS, Die Vermittlung des Sohnes beim ewigen Ausgang des Heiligen Geistes aus dem Vater nach Gregor von Nyssa's *Ad Ablabium* (GNO III/I, 55,21–56,10 Müller), in: VOLKER HENNING DRECOLL & MARGITTA BERGHAUS, (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: The Minor Treatises on Trinitarian Theology and Apollinarism. Proceedings of the nth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Tübingen, 17–20 September 2008* (VCS 106), Leiden 2011, 383–397, p. 396.

324 DANIEL F. STRAMARA JR., Gregory's Terminology for Trinitarian Perichoresis, in: *Vigiliae Christianae* 52 (1998) 257–263, p. 262, speaks of “the theological dynamic behind the

Gregory's key statement about the Father as the source of the power, the Son as the power of the Father, and the Holy Spirit as the spirit of the power,

ἀλλὰ πηγὴ μὲν δυνάμεώς ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ, δύναμις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον,

Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–3

returns here and further on in a different form. The glory that we render to God consists in offering him our good will and the accompanying good deeds which have their source in God, who gives us the power and the glory to be able to live virtuously. We offer God our good will in praise of him and as a sign of our gratitude, having been enabled to do so by the power of the Son, and the Spirit as the spirit of this power.³²⁵

recapitulation (ἀνακεφαλαιώσις), resumptive summing up, of all things *ad extra*, operative in the one πρόσωπον of Christ".

- 325 JOHN MILBANK, *The Word Made Strange. Theology, Language, Culture*, Oxford 1997, in his chapter *The Force of Identity* (pp. 194–216) on Gregory of Nyssa, links the glory of God, the good deeds of human beings, and God's power together in the following way on the basis of his vision of Trinitarian ontology (pp. 196–197): "Whereas for the world, virtuous deeds result in praise, for Gregory virtuous deeds are only, in themselves, the praise of another attribution to God as their source, which is at the same time an offering of the deeds back to God as a return of gratitude. Inversely, in giving us the grace to become virtuous God is glorifying us, that is to say praising us not for our virtue, but in order that we can be virtuous. Virtue for Gregory is a power, *dynamis*, and a power that we must will, and yet this power, including our will, entirely begins before us as the Power of God. And though we receive it, we can only receive it actively (else it would not be our virtue) to the limit of our participating capacity. Against Eunomius and his view that the Father's glory is essentially incommunicable, Gregory calls attention to the fact that even human creatures, never mind the Son of God, can be glorified by the Father, without finite limit (that means for us, endlessly) with his glory, which is to say his active potential or *dynamis*. The Trinitarian context will offer a yet more radical twist: not only does God's dynamic praise of us precede and produce our virtue, this is even the case (though in an altered sense of 'precede' which involves no temporal priority nor hierarchical supremacy) for the divine *Logos* who is fully and essentially God himself, since the Son is the glory and the *dynamis*, besides being the wisdom of the Father. And this means that the Father's own virtue consists in offering a previously unmerited praise to another, just as he essentially persists also in receiving back this praise."

7.4 *They Who Think the Spirit Unworthy of Supplication Separate the Father from the Son and the Spirit and Turn Themselves into Enemies of Their Own Lives (GNO III.1. 109,16–110,23)*

7.4.1 Greek Text

(109,16) Εἰ οὖν τοσαύτη τοῦ πνεύματος ἡ μεγαλωσύνη καὶ εἴ τι καλὸν καὶ εἴ τι ἀγαθὸν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ διὰ τοῦ μονογενοῦς ἐν τῷ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργοῦντι πνεύματι τελειοῦται, τί ἐκπολεμοῦσιν ἑαυτοὺς τῇ ἰδίᾳ ζωῇ; τί ἀπαλλοτριοῦνται (109,20) τῆς τῶν σφζομένων ἐλπίδος; τί ἀποκόπτουσιν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς πρὸς τὸν θεὸν προσκολλησέως; πῶς γάρ τις προσκολληθήσεται τῷ κυρίῳ μὴ τοῦ πνεύματος τὴν συναφειαν ἡμῶν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐνεργούντος; τί ζυγομαχοῦσι πρὸς ἡμᾶς περὶ λατρείας καὶ προσκυνήσεως; τί κατειρωνεύονται διὰ τοῦ (109,25) τῆς λατρείας ὀνόματος κατὰ τῆς θείας τε καὶ ἀπροσδεοῦς φύσεως ὥσπερ οὐχ ἑαυτοὺς εὐεργετοῦντες ἐν τοῖς ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας αἰτήμασι, ἀλλὰ τιμὴν τινα προσάγοντες, ἐὰν σωθῆναι θελήσῃσι; σὸν κέρδος ἐστὶ τοῦ αἰτούντος ἡ δέησις, οὐχὶ τιμὴ τοῦ παρέχοντος. τί οὖν ὡς χαριζόμενος πρόσει (109,30) τῷ εὐεργέτῃ, μάλλον δὲ οὐδὲ εὐεργέτην τὸν τῶν ἀγαθῶν παρεκτικὸν ἀξιόις ὀνομάζειν; ἀλλὰ τοῦ ζῆν ἀντεχόμενος τὸν ζωοποιὸν ἀτιμάζεις καὶ τὸν ἀγιασμόν ζητῶν παραλογίζῃ (110,1) τὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ ἀγιασμοῦ διανέμοντα καὶ τὸ διδόναι τὰ ἀγαθὰ οὐκ ἀρνούμενος αὐτὸν ἔχειν τὴν δύναμιν τοῦ αἰτεῖσθαι κρίνεις ἀνάξιον, οὐδὲ τοῦτο λογιζόμενος, ὅσῳ μείζον ἐστὶ τὸ δοῦναι τι ἀγαθὸν τοῦ αἰτηθῆναι· τῷ μὲν γὰρ αἰτηθέντι, οὐ (110,5) πάντως προσμαρτυρεῖ τὸ μεγαλεῖον ἢ αἰτήσις· δυνατόν γάρ ἐστιν αἰτηθῆναι τι καὶ τὸν μὴ ἔχοντα. ἐπὶ γὰρ τῇ προαιρέσει τοῦ αἰτοῦντός ἐστιν· ὁ δὲ παρασχών τι ἀγαθὸν ἀναμφίβολον τῆς προσοῦσης αὐτῷ δυνάμεως πεποιήται τὴν ἐπίδειξιν. τί οὖν τὸ μείζον αὐτῷ προσμαρτυρῶν—λέγω δὲ τὸ δύνασθαι (110,10) δοῦναι πᾶν ὃ τι καλόν—ὡς μεγάλου τινὸς ἀποστερεῖς τῆς αἰτήσεως, καίτοι τοῦτο πολλάκις, καθὼς εἴρηται, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν οὐδενὸς κυρίων δι’ ἀπάτης τοῦ προσιόντος γίνεται. αἰτοῦσι καὶ παρὰ τῶν εἰδώλων οἱ τῆς ματαιότητος δοῦλοι τὰ κατὰ γνώμην αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ’ οὐ παρὰ τοῦτο δόξαν τινὰ (110,15) προστίθῃσι τοῖς εἰδώλοις ἢ αἰτήσις· κάκεῖνοι δὲ δι’ ἀπάτης αὐτοὺς παρέχοντες προσδοκίᾳ τοῦ μετασχεῖν τινος ὧν ἐλπίζουσιν αἰτοῦντες οὐ διαλείπουσιν. σὺ δὲ πεπεισμένος οἶων καὶ ὅσων παρεκτικὸν ἐστὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄγιον ὑπερορᾶς τῆς αἰτήσεως καὶ καταφεύγεις ἐπὶ τὸν νόμον τὸν κελεύοντα (110,20) κύριον τὸν θεὸν προσκυνεῖν καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύειν; πῶς οὖν αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις, εἰπέ μοι, ἀποσχίσας αὐτὸν τῆς πρὸς τὸν μονογενῆ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα ἑαυτοῦ συναφείας; ἀλλ’ αὕτη Ἰουδαϊκὴ ἡ προσκύνησις.

7.4.2 Translation

(109,16) So then, since the majesty of the Spirit is so great, and since any beautiful and good thing that comes from God through the Only-Begotten is made complete in the Spirit that “produces all things in all” (1 Cor 12:6), why do they incite themselves to battle against their own life? Why do they alienate them-

selves from the hope of those who are being saved? Why do they cut themselves off from attachment to God? Indeed, how will one be attached to the Lord unless the Spirit produces our connection with him? Why do they quarrel against us concerning adoration and worship? Why do they use the name “adoration” for their mockery of the divine and self-sufficient nature, as if they gain no benefit for themselves when they pray for salvation, but instead offer some honor [to the Spirit]—that is, if they really wish to be saved! When you pray, your request profits you; it does not give honor to the one who answers your prayer. Well then, what do you contribute to the benefactor, as if granting a favor? Or rather, why do you not even deign to use the name “benefactor” for the giver of good things? Although you cleave to life, you dishonor the life-giver; although you seek sanctification, you cheat (110) the one who distributes the gift of sanctification; although you do not deny that he³²⁶ has the power to give the good things, you deem him unworthy of being asked. You do not consider how much greater it is to give some good thing than to be asked for it! After all, by no means does a request constitute evidence of the greatness of the one who is asked. It is possible to be asked for something that one does not possess, for the request depends solely on the choice³²⁷ of the one who is asking. But the one who has provided some good thing has made an unambiguous demonstration of the power that belongs to him. Well then, why is it that, although you testify that the greater thing belongs to the Spirit—I mean, the power of giving every beautiful thing whatsoever—you nonetheless deprive it of the request, as if the request were something great? And yet this [receiving of a request] often happens, as is said, even for those who are lords of no one because of the deceitfulness of their attendant. The slaves of vanity even ask for whatever they wish from idols, but the request does not add any glory to the idols by means of this action. Once they have produced these idols in the deluded expectation of gaining some share of what they hope for, they never stop asking. But as for you, although you are convinced that the Holy Spirit is the giver of so many marvelous gifts, why is it that you look down upon asking and take refuge in the law which commands that we worship the Lord God and adore him alone? (cf. Deut 6:13) Tell me, then, how will you adore him alone if you sever him from his connection with the Only-Begotten and his own Spirit? Truly, this is a Jewish kind of worship.

326 ARG: Here Gregory shifts to using a masculine participle and pronoun for the Spirit.

327 ARG here translates *προαίρεσις* as choice.

7.4.3 Paraphrase

They who acknowledge the Spirit as the giver of all good things, but do not believe he is worthy to receive supplication, as if supplication in itself were some form of honour that the Spirit does not deserve, separate the Father from the Son and the Spirit, and become enemies of their own lives, because it is the Spirit who sanctifies and gives life, coming from the Father through the mediation of the Son.

7.4.4 Sub-questions

What rhetorical device does Gregory use abundantly here?

Gregory uses six consecutive questions, almost all of which begin with τί (*Maced GNO III.I. 109,19, twice; 109,20; 109,23; 109,24*), interrupted once by a question beginning with πῶς (*Maced GNO III.I. 109,21*), to express his great incomprehension at the thinking and behaviour of his opponents, and to attempt to demonstrate the absurdity of their position. But not just that; he explains that in their struggle against Gregory, they are in fact enemies of their own lives. Partly, the questions are rhetorical and the obvious answers are implied, for instance that the positions that Gregory identifies are the result of stupidity as well as pride. Given this series of questions in which Gregory refers to his opponents in the third person plural, he makes a striking shift to the second person singular, choosing a single imaginary opponent with whom he continues his polemic: σὸν κέρδος ἐστὶ τοῦ αἰτοῦντος ἢ δέησις, οὐχὶ τιμὴ τοῦ παρέχοντος (*Maced GNO III.I. 109,28–29*). Gregory continues this quasi-dialogue until *Maced GNO III.I. 110, 27–28*: πῶς γὰρ αὐτὸν ὁμολογήσεις, (εἰ) μὴ ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ; He then shifts back to the third person plural. This quasi-dialogue not only enlivens his debate with his opponents, but also underlines the existential importance of the correct position for the opponents addressed in the second person singular, whom Gregory accuses of worshipping according to the manner of the Jews.³²⁸

328 There is a good example of a quasi-dialogue in *Diem lum GNO IX. 228,26–229,7*, where Gregory argues with a Pneumatomach, second person singular: “It may be you are offended, you who contendest boldly against the glory of the Spirit, and that you grudge to the Spirit that veneration wherewith he is revered by the godly. Leave off contending with me: resist, if you can, those words of the Lord which gave to men the rule of the baptismal invocation. What says the Lord’s command? Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (Mt 28:19).” (τάχα δυσχεραίνεις ὁ πρὸς τὴν δόξαν τοῦ πνεύματος τολμηρῶς μαχόμενος καὶ ζηλοτυπεῖς τὸν παράκλητον τοῦ σεβάσματος, ὃ παρά τῶν εὐσεβῶν σέβεται· καταλιπὼν δὲ ἐμοὶ συμπλέκεσθαι ἀντίστηθι ταῖς τοῦ κυρίου φωναῖς, εἰ δύνασαι, αἱ τὴν ἐπίκλησιν τοῦ βαπτίσματος τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐνομοθέτησαν. τί δέ φησι τὸ τοῦ δεσπότου παράγγελμα; Βαπτίζοντες αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀγίου πνεύματος, transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

What main accusation does Gregory address against his opponents?

The first question also contains Gregory's main accusation: they have become enemies of their own lives, by refusing to accept the conclusion of the argument—a convincing one, according to Gregory, about the Spirit as the one who completes all that is good and beautiful.

Gregory assumes that his argument about the role of the Spirit as he described it is plausible, and that its final conclusion therefore demands assent: all that is beautiful and good comes to completion from God, through the mediation of the Son, in the Spirit who works all things in all people (καὶ εἴ τι καλὸν καὶ εἴ τι ἀγαθὸν παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ διὰ τοῦ μονογενοῦς ἐν τῷ πάντῃ ἐν πάσιν ἐνεργοῦντι πνεύματι τελειοῦται, *Maced* GNO III.I. 109,17–18). In including this addition to the Spirit, derived from 1 Cor 12:11, Gregory refers to *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,10–11 and *Maced* GNO III.I. 99,15 (ὅτι πάντα ἐν πάσιν ἐνεργεῖ καθὼς βούλεται), but, more importantly, to *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,5–8:

from him (sc. the Father) the life-giving grace originates, gushing forth with life as if from a spring through the Only-Begotten Son, who is the true life, and is made complete in those who are worthy by the activity of the Spirit.

In this statement, life is connected with and given in baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and the Spirit is called the one who makes complete, thanks to his ἐνέργεια.³²⁹ In the continuation, in *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,11–14, Gregory will once again connect human beings who choose to be enemies of their own lives with their refusal to affirm the Spirit as the one who works everything in all people:

After all, no one is so estranged from himself and from the Spirit that he would not agree with the claim that all these names are observed in connection with the Holy Spirit. For the one that by nature is 'ruler' (Ps LXX 50:14, 142:10; Jn 16:13) rules, the one that 'produces all things in all' (1 Cor 12:6, 11), holds power.

In *Maced* GNO III.I. 114,7–9, finally, the Spirit's working of all good things is substantivised and used as one of the names used for the Spirit:

³²⁹ In the discussion of this *locus* (on pp. 216–218), I referred to Gregory's *Epist* V GNO VIII.II. 33,14–17. The one, imperishable life has its source in the God of all, comes to us through the Son, and is established in the Holy Spirit: μία ἐστὶν ἡ ζωὴ ἡμῶν ἡ διὰ τῆς εἰς τὴν ἀγίαν τριάδα πίστεως παραγινομένη, ἐκ μὲν τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν ὅλων πηγάζουσα, διὰ δὲ τοῦ υἱοῦ προοίοντα, ἐν δὲ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι ἐνεργοῦμένη. The important and telling word ἐνεργέω is also used here.

the one who rules, who exercises lordship, and who has authority and who activates all the good things in the entire creation (τὸ πάντα ἐνεργοῦν ἐν πᾶσιν).

This series of statements clearly expresses Gregory's view that the Spirit stands at the end of the Trinitarian *exitus* and thus plays a key role in associating human beings with the Trinitarian *reditus*, i.e. human beings are given the true life thanks to the ἐνέργεια of the Spirit. On the basis of the hypothesis that his previous argument is valid, Gregory believes he is justified in accusing his opponents of having become enemies of their own lives. This enmity brings with it alienation from the hope of those who are saved: to be able to share in the *reditus* to God. It involves cutting oneself loose from the matrimonial bond with God. This matrimonial bond comes into being on condition that the Spirit is permitted to bring it about. Gregory uses portentous terms: προσκόλλησις, προσκολλᾶσθαι τῷ κυρίῳ, συνάφεια. These are words that, if placed in the same context, belong to the linguistic field of the matrimonial union between husband and wife. Gen LXX 2:24 speaks of a man who leaves his father and mother to be united with his wife: καὶ προσκολληθήσεται πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, a verse that is quoted in the New Testament (cf. Mt 19:5; Mk 10:7; Eph 5:31). In using the term συνάφεια in this context, Gregory describes both the bond between human beings and God that the Spirit works and the bond between the divine persons which he described earlier in *Maced*: ἀχώριστον τὴν συνάφειαν ὁμολογούντες (*Maced* GNO III.I. 100,23–24) as a matrimonial bond. In the continuation, Gregory speaks of the bond between the Son and the Spirit: οὕτως ἀδιάστατός ἐστι πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τῷ υἱῷ ἢ συνάφεια (*Maced* GNO III.I. 103,4–5). In a similar way in *Eust* GNO III.I. 16,12–13: τῆς ἀχωρίστου καὶ ἀδιαστάτου πρὸς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα συναφείας. In *Cant* IV GNO VI. 108,10–16, Gregory describes the bond between Christ and the Church using the term προσκόλλησις, having a few lines before discussed the mingling of the human nature and the divine nature:

In a figurative turn of speech the Bride uses the word bed to mean the mingling of the human race with the Divine, just as the great apostle has the virgin—us—‘betrothed’ to Christ (2 Cor 11:2), and leads the soul in a bridal procession, and declares that the joining of the two in the communion of one body is the great mystery of the union of Christ with the church (cf. Eph 5:32).³³⁰

330 *Cant* IV GNO VI. 108,10–16: κλίνην δὲ ὀνομάζει ἡ νύμφη τῇ τροπικῇ σημασίᾳ τὴν πρὸς τὸ θεῖον ἀνακράσιν τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἐρμηνεύουσα, ὡς καὶ ὁ μέγας ἀπόστολος ἀρμόζεται τῷ Χρισ-

Gregory clarifies in the form of a question that, while his opponents may treat him as their enemy, they in fact have made themselves into enemies of their own lives by cutting themselves off from the matrimonial bond with God, thus prohibiting themselves from making the *reditus* to God. Gregory concludes this part by asking why they scold at him and his allies about worship and adoration. In doing so, Gregory essentially introduces the completion of his fourth response: beside the Father and the Son, the Spirit is deserving of adoration, that is: supplication for mercy. The completion of the fourth response is also the pinnacle of his four-fold reply to the accusation, and it segues into the conclusion of the work as a whole: the free will that human beings have as a form of praise and a gift to the incomprehensible greatness of the Trinity of whom the Spirit is part.

The core problem is that Gregory's opponent separates God (the Father) from communion with the Son and the Spirit, thus lapsing into worship according to the manner of the Jews.

What vision on the relationship between rendering honour and supplication does Gregory begin to develop here?

Gregory accuses his opponents of covert mockery which, through their interpretation of the word adoration, is directed against the divine nature that is not deficient in any respect. They use their expression of their desire for salvation before God as a form of giving honour that enhances the honour of the addressee. Because they do not worship the Spirit as the Giver of life, and in doing so cut themselves off from the connection with God, they demonstrate the perversion of their worship: they acknowledge that the Spirit gives good things, but they refuse to render honour—that is ask for salvation—to the Spirit. The Spirit, not being divine, does not deserve the honour of their supplication. Gregory's imaginary opponent even refuses to call the Spirit benefactor.

At the end of his first response (the divinity and the full glory of the Spirit make him equal in honour and dignity to the Father and the Son), Gregory concluded that the honourable uttering of the characteristics of God, and thus of the Spirit, cannot add anything to God's fullness of honour (*Maced GNO III.I. 96,23–97,20*), after having demonstrated (*Maced GNO III.I. 95,27–96,22*) that the Spirit's fullness of honour, like that of the Father and the Son, does not depend on our free will, because they are perfect. That section addressed the divine nature in which the Spirit fully shares, so that the Spirit is also

τῷ τὴν παρθένον, ἡμᾶς, καὶ νυμφοστολεῖ [τὴν ψυχὴν] καὶ τὴν προσκόλλησιν τῶν δύο εἰς ἑνὸς σώματος κοινωνίαν τὸ μέγα μυστήριον εἶναι λέγει τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ πρὸς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐνώσεως (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

fully involved in the work of creation. In his fourth response, Gregory makes the same argument, but this time on the level of the divine persons who, given the theology of the circle of glory that Gregory develops, are all three equally deserving of honour, without human rendering of honour being able to add anything to the fullness of honour of the divine persons, who stand in a dynamic relationship to each other. Such rendering of honour is nothing else than addressing supplications to the divine persons.

The addressing of supplications, Gregory observes, is not in itself a form of worship that augments the honour of the one to whom the supplication is addressed. It is possible to make supplication to some addressee who is incapable to grant the desired gift. This is the case, for instance, with those slaves of vanity, the idolaters, who in their self-deceit continue to send up supplication to the idols. Provision of the desired goods by the addressee of the supplication is proof of his power to give the good things in question. It is all the more remarkable that Gregory's opponent does acknowledge that the Spirit gives good things, but still refuses to address his supplications to him, which is a result of his fundamental error: to separate the Spirit and thus the Son from the divine, in combination with the mistaken notion that asking for salvation somehow increases the honour of the addressee.

What opinion about the Spirit does Gregory ascribe here to his opponents?

Gregory's opponents acknowledge that the Spirit is the giver of all good things, particularly through baptism, the giver even of life itself, and that he is therefore a benefactor, but they refuse to call the Spirit by this name and refuse to render him the honour that is fitting to this name. Gregory repeatedly confirms that his opponents acknowledge that the Spirit is the giver of all good things:

although you do not deny that he has the power to give the good things (*Maced GNO III.I. 110,1–2*); Why is it that, although you testify that the greater thing belongs to the Spirit—I mean, the power of giving every beautiful thing whatsoever? (*Maced GNO III.I. 110,9–10*); although you are convinced that the Holy Spirit is the giver of so many marvelous gifts (*Maced GNO III.I. 110,17–18*).

They appeal to Holy Scripture, to Deut 6:13 (καὶ καταφεύγεις ἐπὶ τὸν νόμον τὸν κελεύοντα κύριον τὸν θεὸν προσκυνεῖν καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύειν; *Maced GNO III.I. 110,19–20*).³³¹ Because his opponents separate God from communion with the

³³¹ *Maced GNO III.I. 110,20* is the only place in the works of Gregory to quote Deut 6:13.

Spirit, and therefore also with the Son, they lapse into the obsolete worship of the Jews.³³² Incidentally, *Maced GNO III.I. 110,24–27* shows that Gregory's opponents think about God in terms of Father and Son: the concept of God for them includes the Father and the Son, but not the Spirit: Ἄλλ' ἐρεῖς ὅτι πατέρα ἐννοῶν καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τῇ προσηγορίᾳ συμπεριέλαβον (*Maced GNO III.I. 110,24–25*).

7.5 *In Worshipping the Father, Both the Son and the Spirit Are Inseparably Also Included in the Worship. Gregory's Opponents Even Refuse to Give the Spirit the Honour That Is Granted to Human Beings (GNO III.I. 110,24–111,24)*

7.5.1 Greek Text

(110,24) Ἄλλ' ἐρεῖς ὅτι πατέρα ἐννοῶν καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τῇ προση-(110,25)γορίᾳ συμπεριέλαβον. τὸν δὲ υἱόν, εἰπέ μοι, τῇ διανοίᾳ λαβὼν ἄρ' οὐ συμπαρεδέξω καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον; οὐκ ἂν ἀντείποις. πῶς γὰρ αὐτὸν ὁμολογήσεις, (εἰ) μὴ ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ; πότε οὖν τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα χωρίζεται ὥστε τοῦ πατρὸς προσκυνουμένου μὴ συμπεριλαμβάνεσθαι μετὰ τοῦ (110,30) υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος τὴν προσκύνησιν; αὐτὴν δὲ τὴν προσκύνησιν τί ποτε εἶναι λογίζονται, ἣν ὡς ἐξαίρετόν τι γέρας τῷ ἐπὶ πάντων θεῷ χαριζόμενοι καὶ ἕως τοῦ μονο-(111,1)γένους ἔσθ' ὅτε τὴν τιμὴν ταύτην διαβιβάζοντες ἀπαξιούσι τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ τοιοῦτου γέρωσ; ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνη συνήθεια τὴν πρὸς τὸ ἔδαφος τῶν ὑποχειρίων ἐπικλίσιν, ἣν ἀσπαζόμενοι τοὺς δυνατωτέρους ἐπιτηδεύουσι, τοῦτο προσαγορεύει (111,5) προσκύνησιν· καθὼς φαίνεται καὶ ὁ πατριάρχης Ἰακώβ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ τὴν ὀργὴν ἰλεούμενος τὸ καταδεέστερον ὑπὸ ταπεινοφροσύνης διὰ τοῦ τοιοῦτου σχήματος ἐν τῇ ὑπαντήσῃ πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐπιδείκνυσθαι. Προσεκύνησε, γὰρ φησιν, τρίτον ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν. καὶ οἱ τοῦ Ἰωσήφ ἀδελφοί, ἕως αὐτοί τε ἠγνόουν (111,10) κάκεινος τὴν ἄγνοιαν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὑπεκρίνετο, διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τοῦ ἀξιώματος τῇ προσκύνῃ τὴν δυναστείαν ἐτίμησαν. προσκυνεῖ δὲ καὶ ὁ μέγας Ἀβραάμ τοὺς Χετταίους, τοὺς ἐγχωρίους ὁ ἔπηλυσ, δεικνύς, οἶμαι, δι' ὧν ἐποίει, ὅσον οἱ αὐτόχθονες τῶν παροικούντων ἐπικρατέστεροι. καὶ πολλὰ (111,15) τοιαῦτα λέγειν ἐστὶν ἔκ τε τῶν ἀρχαίων διηγημάτων καὶ ἐκ τῶν παρόντων τοῦ βίου ὑποδειγμάτων. ἄρ' οὖν τοῦτο νοοῦσι καὶ αὐτοὶ τὴν προσκύνησιν; καὶ πῶς οὐ καταγέλαστον τὸ μήτε τοῦτου οἶεσθαι δεῖν ἀξιοῦν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, οὐ καὶ τοὺς Χαναναίους ὁ πατριάρχης ἠξίωσεν; ἢ ἄλλην τινα (111,20) παρὰ ταύτην νομίζουσι τὴν προσκύνησιν, ὡς τὴν μὲν ἀνθρώποις, τὴν δὲ τῇ ὑπερεχούσῃ φύσει προσήκουσαν; πῶς οὖν καθόλου τὴν προσκύνησιν ἀθετοῦσιν ἐπὶ τοῦ πνεύματος μηδὲ τὴν ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων συγκεχωρημένην αὐτῷ χαριζόμενοι;

332 For further explanation on Gregory's negative attitude to Jewish worship, see the comments on *Maced GNO III.I. 113,30–31*, pp. 282–284.

7.5.2 Translation

(110,24) But you will say that when you think of Father, the Son too is included in the title. Tell me, when you have apprehended the Son in your mind, haven't you also admitted the Holy Spirit? You cannot deny it. For how will you confess him, unless in the Holy Spirit? (1 Cor 12:3) At what point, therefore, is the Spirit separated from the Son such that when the Father is worshiped the worship of the Spirit is not included along with [the worship of] the Son?

What exactly do they think this worship is, which they give to the God over all as if it is some special honor and occasionally extend this honor to (111) the Only-Begotten, though they judge the Spirit unworthy of such an honor? Human convention gives the title of "worship" to the prostration of subordinates on the ground, which they do when they salute their superiors. It is clear that the patriarch Jacob did this when, in order to appease his brother's anger, he displayed his inferior position by humbling himself through such a gesture when he went out to meet him. For it says, "he worshiped"³³³ three times on the ground." (Gen 33:3) And while the brothers of Joseph did not yet recognize him, he pretended not to know them, and they honored his ruling authority with worship because of his high rank. (cf. Gen 42:6) And the great Abraham worshiped the Hittites (cf. Gen 23:7), as a foreigner to the country's inhabitants; by his actions he showed, I think, how much more powerful the native people were than the sojourners. And one can cite many such examples, from both ancient narratives and current affairs. Well then, is this how these people understand "worship"? How is it anything other than ridiculous to think that we should not deem the Holy Spirit worthy of the very thing the patriarch deemed the Canaanites worthy of? Or do they think worship is something different than this, such that there is one appropriate for humans and another for the transcendent nature? If so, how do they reject worship of the Spirit altogether—not even granting to the Spirit that worship which they allow for humans!

7.5.3 Paraphrase

They are mistaken who think that in addressing the Father, they simultaneously address only the Son. In worshipping the Father, both the Son and the Spirit are inseparably also included in the worship. Gregory's opponents wholly reject adoration in the case of the Spirit, and refuse to give the Spirit even the homage that is granted to human beings.

333 ARG: προσεκύνησε, literally, "bowed".

7.5.4 Sub-questions

To what misconception about the divine persons do Gregory's opponents subscribe?

Gregory acknowledges that his opponents, still addressed here in the second person singular (but once again in the third person plural from *Maced GNO III.I. 110,30* onwards), think about God in terms of Father *and* Son: the concept of God for them includes both the Father and the Son: Ἀλλ' ἐρεῖς ὅτι πατέρα ἐννοῶν καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τῇ προσηγορίᾳ συμπεριέλαβον (*Maced GNO III.I. 110, 24–25*). Given this position, his opponents will find it difficult to deny that, in speaking about the Son, they also include the Spirit, because it is only possible to confess the Son through the Holy Spirit, as 1 Cor 12:3 teaches. Gregory expressly assumes, on the basis of an argument advanced by his opponents which he mentioned before in *Maced GNO III.I. 92,31–34* (that the Spirit was handed down by the Lord to his disciples as the third in the order, and thus came to be separate from the notion that is fitting to God), that the Pneumatomachi keep the Spirit outside the concept of God, as the following question shows:

At what point, therefore, is the Spirit separated from the Son such that when the Father is worshiped the worship of the Spirit is not included along with [the worship of] the Son?

Maced GNO III.I. 110,28–30

Precisely at the end of his work (*Maced GNO III.I. 115,26–32*), Gregory emphasises once more very forcefully that Father, Son, *and* Spirit are inseparable, as the three divine persons who are deserving of gratitude and honour, glory and adoration.

In his opposition against the Pneumatomachi, Gregory in *Diem lum GNO IX. 230,6–7*, as a rather meagre explanation of the sanctification that issues equally from the Father *and* the Son *and* the Spirit, gives the example of the gratitude and restitution that would be due to three benefactors who together and in equal parts paid a ransom for prisoners of war. It is clear from his comment in the conclusion of this example that this is not intended to be an accurate representation of the faith:

This we may see, so far as illustration goes, for our aim at present is not to render a strict account of the faith.³³⁴

334 *Diem lum GNO IX. 230,6–7*: Καὶ ταῦτα μὲν ὅσον ἐν ὑποδείγμασιν· οὐ γὰρ νῦν ἡμῖν σκοπὸς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀπευθύνειν λόγον (transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON).

In *Eust GNO III.I. 7,17–8,3*, Gregory demonstrates that the Lord, in handing down the saving faith, as Mt 28:19 recounts, in fact connected the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son. In the life-creating force, which transforms our human nature from perishable life into imperishability, the power of the Spirit operates in conjunction with that of the Father and the Son, and is inseparable from that of the Father and the Son, nor can the Spirit be separated from the Father and the Son in any other respect. Gregory uses compounds with συν up to six times in this passage in *Eust GNO III.I. 7,17–8,3*: συνάπτει, συνημμένον, συνάφειαν, συμπαραλήφθεισα, συναπτόμενον. Over and over again, he underlines the inseparable bond between the Spirit and the Father and the Son.

On what grounds does Gregory believe that his opponents misunderstand the concept of worship?

Gregory begins from the starting point that the worship of God is in line with the worship of people; he does this on the basis of the customary use of the word προσκύνησις, which was used both for the worship that people bring to other human beings and to God, as the LXX shows. Linguistic convention calls the custom of subordinates to bow to the ground when welcoming someone more powerful worship, προσκύνησις. Gregory reaches the dreadful conclusion that his opponents give to the Father the worship that is also given to human beings, and are willing to extend this also to the Son, but that they regard the Spirit as unworthy even of the worship they are accustomed to give to human beings. Gregory regards this position of his opponents as a ridiculous misconception (καταγέλαστον, *Maced GNO III.I. 11,17*). The only way out that Gregory has to offer is that they wish to distinguish between the worship they give to human beings and to God. But this brings to light the absurdity of their position even more clearly, because they insist on refusing the Spirit any worship at all. It will soon become clear that Gregory offers this solution—a distinction between the worship of human beings and of God—because it serves the continuation of his argument. He demonstrates further on that this distinction does in fact exist: unlike with the honour of people, it is impossible to add anything to the honour of God.

Gregory's observation that the worship that human beings give to their betters is called προσκύνησις according to linguistic convention is intriguing, because in Greek literature, προσκύνησις and προσκυνέω are always used for adoration/worship of the divine or the numinous.³³⁵ The Septuagint was the first text to use προσκύνησις not only for the divine but also for humans. Did the

335 Cf. LSJ col. 1518; WALTER BAUER & K. ALAND & B. ALAND, *Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der frühchristlichen Literatur*, Berlin 1988

LXX translators in doing so seek to neutralise the pagan numinous aspect that is inherent in the word προσκύνησις? Προσκυνέω literally means to kiss. In the Persian Empire, subordinate officials were not permitted to kiss their king on the cheek, but only to gesture a kiss with their hand, or, for subordinates further down the hierarchy, to bow to the ground before him. The Greeks limited this form of worship to the gods or the numinous. Herodotus says the following in his *Histories* when he describes the religion and customs of the Persians:

When they (sc. Persians) meet each other along the way, it is possible to tell from the following whether the persons who meet are of the same rank. For instead of addressing each other, they kiss each other on the mouth. But if one is of a slightly lower rank than the other, they kiss each other on the cheek. But if one is of much lower rank than the other, he falls down and prostrates himself before the other.³³⁶

In the Book of Esther 3:2, the refusal of Esther's stepfather, the Jew Mordecai, to fall at Haman's feet (ὁ δὲ Μαρδοχαῖος οὐ προσέκυνει αὐτῷ), the highest official of Ahasuerus or Xerxes I, king of Persia from 486 to 465 before Christ, was the occasion for Haman to attempt to exterminate the Jewish people in the Persian Empire.³³⁷

In his *Anabasis of Alexander* 4.10.5–12.5, the Greek-writing historian Arrian of Nicomedia (c. 86–after 145) writes of Alexander the Great's desire that his Macedonians, too, would pay him προσκύνησις. The historian Callisthenes of Olynthus (c. 370–327 BC), a pupil of Aristotle and a member of Alexander's retinue, opposed this desire in a lengthy discourse, thus forfeiting Alexander's favour. Arrian begins his account as follows:

ὕπὲρ δὲ τῆς προσκυνήσεως ὅπως ἡγναντιώθη (sc. Callisthenes) Ἀλεξάνδρῳ, καὶ τοῖόςδε κατέχει λόγος.

(6. Auflage), k. 1434–1436 (remarkably, the word προσκύνησις does not occur in the New Testament).

336 Herodotus *Histories* 1.134: Ἐντυγχάνοντες δ' ἀλλήλοισι ἐν τῇσι ὁδοῖσι, τῷδε ἂν τις διαγνοίη εἰ ὅμοιοί εἰσι οἱ συντυγχάνοντες· ἀντὶ γὰρ τοῦ προσαγορεύειν ἀλλήλους φιλέουσι τοῖσι στόμασι· ἦν δὲ ἢ οὐτερος ὑποδέεστερος ὀλίγῳ, τὰς παρειὰς φιλέονται· ἦν δὲ πολλῷ ἢ οὐτερος ἀγεννέστερος, προσπίπτων προσκυνέει τὸν ἕτερον.

337 BEATE EGO, Mordecai's Refusal of Proskunesis before Haman according to the Septuagint. Traditio-Historical and Literal Aspects, in: GÉZA G. XERAVITS & JÓZSEF ZSENGELLÉR (ed.), *Deuterocanonical Additions of the Old Testament Books. Selected Studies*, Berlin 2010, 16–29.

Given his own view of worship, Gregory will in the continuation develop a very specific definition of προσκύνησις.

What role do the examples of worship that Gregory derives from Scripture play here?

Gregory expressly avoids the meaning of προσκύνησις that is customary in classical Greek literature: the adoration/worship of the divine or the numinous, but adopts the Septuagint's use of this word, which also applies προσκύνησις to the human domain whenever there is a clear disparity of power. Persons who show προσκύνησις thus acknowledge this disparity and acknowledge their own subordination to the more powerful person before whom they bow to the ground. Using Scripture, particularly stories from the Old Testament, Gregory is able to demonstrate the absurdity of his opponents' position, who do render προσκύνησις to the Father and the Son, but not to the Spirit: if even in Scripture the patriarchs Abraham and Jacob, and Joseph's brothers, show προσκύνησις to their fellow human beings, to the Hittites, who are subsequently designated as Canaanites, to Jacob's brother, and to Joseph respectively, how dare Gregory's opponents then refuse to afford this προσκύνησις to the Spirit?

Gregory here uses Scripture as an expression of linguistic convention (ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνη συνήθεια, *Maced GNO III.I. 111,2*), which provides material for stories of yore and corresponds to examples from contemporary life (ἐκ τε τῶν ἀρχαίων διηγημάτων καὶ ἐκ τῶν παρόντων τοῦ βίου ὑποδείγματων, *Maced GNO III.I. 111,15–16*).

**7.6 True Adoration of God Is Humble Supplication for God's Mercy.
Because the Spirit Is of Divine Nature and Is the Giver of Life, He Is
Deserving of Worship through Supplication for Mercy (GNO III.I.
III,25–III,23)**

7.6.1 Greek Text

(111,25) Τίνα δὲ καὶ νομίζουσιν ἰδίως ἀποτετάχθαι τῷ θεῷ προσκυνήσεως τρόπον; τὸ εἰπεῖν τῷ ῥήματι ἢ τὸ ἐνεργῆσαι τῷ σχήματι; ἢ ταῦτα μὲν καὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἐστὶ κοινά· καὶ γὰρ λέγεται καὶ ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων τὰ ῥήματα καὶ ἐνεργεῖται τὰ σχήματα· τί οὖν ἐπὶ θεοῦ τὸ ἐξαίρετον; ἢ παντὶ δῆλον (111,30) τῷ καὶ ὁποσονοῦν διανοίας μετέχοντι ὅτι θεοῦ μὲν ἄξιον δῶρον ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις ἔχει οὐδέν· τῶν γὰρ ἀγαθῶν ἡμῶν ὁ ποιητὴς ἡμῶν χρεῖαν οὐκ ἔχει. ἡμεῖς δὲ οἱ ἄνθρωποι (112,1) τὰς τιμητικὰς ταύτας καὶ ἀγαπητικὰς ἐνδείξεις, ἃς ἐπ' ἀλλήλων ποιούμεθα ἕτερος τοῦ ἐτέρου ταπεινότερος εἶναι τῇ ὁμολογίᾳ τῆς τοῦ πέλας ὑπεροχῆς ἐνδεικνύμενοι, ταύτας μετηνέγκαμεν εἰς τὴν θεραπείαν τῆς κρείττονος φύσεως τῶν (112,5) ἐν ἡμῖν τὰ τίμια τῇ ἀτιμῇ τῷ φύσει δωροφοροῦντες. καὶ διὰ τοῦτο, ἐπειδὴ προσιόντες βασιλεύσιν ἢ δυνάσταις οἱ ἄνθρω-

ποι, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἂν γενέσθαι τι αὐτοῖς παρὰ τῶν δυναστευόντων θελήσωσιν, οὐ ψιλὴν προσάγουσι τοῖς κρατοῦσι τὴν αἴτησιν, ἀλλ' ὥς ἂν μάλιστα πρὸς οἶκτον καὶ εὖνοιαν ἑαυτῶν (112,10) ἐπαγάγοιντο, ταπεινοῦνται τῷ λόγῳ καὶ προσκυνοῦσι τῷ σχήματι καὶ γονάτων ἄπτονται καὶ εἰς ἔδαφος πίπτουσι καὶ διὰ πάντων οἰκτιζόμενοι συνήγορον τῆς αἰτήσεως ἑαυτῶν προβάλλονται, δι' ὧν ποιούσι τὸν ἔλεον. διὰ τοῦτο οἱ τὴν ἀληθὴ δύναστέϊαν ἐπεγνωκότες, δι' ἧς πάντα διοικεῖται τὰ (112,15) ὄντα, προσιόντες ὑπὲρ ὧν ἂν ᾗ φίλον αὐτοῖς. οἱ μὲν ταπεινοὶ τὰς ψυχὰς περὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τοῦτ' αὖ σπουδαζομένων, οἱ δὲ ὑψηλοὶ τὴν διάνοιαν περὶ τῶν αἰώνιων καὶ ἀπορρήτων ἐλπίδων, ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἔχουσιν ὅπως αἰτήσουσιν οὐδὲ χωρεῖ ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις ἐνδείξασθαι τινα τιμὴν πρὸς τὴν μεγαλο- (112,20) πρέπειαν τῆς δόξης φθάνουσιν, μετήνεγκαν τὴν ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων νενομισμένην θεραπείαν εἰς τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ τιμὴν. καὶ τοῦτο ἐστὶν ἡ προσκύνῃς ἡ μετὰ ἰκεσίας καὶ ταπεινότητος τῶν καταθυμίων τινὸς αἰτήσις γινομένη. διὸ καὶ Δανιὴλ κάμπτει τῷ κυρίῳ τὰ γόνατα, ἐπὶ τοῦ αἰχμαλώτου (113,25) λαοῦ τὴν φιλικὴν ἀνθρωπίνην αἰτούμενος καὶ ὁ τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν βαστάσας καὶ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐντυγχάνων διὰ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὃν ἀνέλαβε πίπτειν ἐπὶ τὸ πρόσωπον ἐν καιρῷ προσευχῆς ὑπὸ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἱστορεῖται καὶ τοῦτ' αὖ τῷ σχήματι τὴν εὐχὴν ἐποιεῖτο, νομοθετῶν, οἶμαι, τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ ζωῇ τὸ μὴ (113,1) ἀπαυθαδιάζεσθαι ἐπὶ τοῦ καιροῦ τῆς αἰτήσεως, ἀλλὰ διὰ πάντων πρὸς τὸ ἐλεεινὸν μεθαρμόζεσθαι, ἐπειδὴ Κύριος ὑπερηφάνους ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσι χάριν καὶ Πᾶς ὁ ὑψὼν ἑαυτὸν ταπεινωθήσεται. εἰ οὖν ἡ προσκύνῃς (113,5) οἷον ἰκετηρία τίς ἐστι, εἰς συνηγορίαν προβεβλημένη τοῦ σκοποῦ τῆς αἰτήσεως, ἡ δὲ αἴτησις πρὸς τὸν τῆς διανομῆς κύριον γίνεται, τίς ἡ διάνοια τῆς καινῆς ταύτης νομοθεσίας; οὐ συνωρῶ, μήτε παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος αἰτεῖν μήτε ὑποκύπτειν τῷ ἄρχοντι μήτε θεραπεύειν τὸν δυναστεύοντα μήτε προσ- (113,10) κυνεῖν τὸν ἡγούμενον· ὅτι γὰρ πάντα ταῦτα θεωρεῖται περὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, οὐδεὶς οὕτως ἐχθρὸς ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος ὥς μὴ συνθέσθαι τῷ λόγῳ· ἡγείται μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν τῇ φύσει, δυναστεύει δὲ τὸ πάντα ἐνεργεῖν ἐν πάσιν, ἐξουσιάζει δὲ τὸ κατ' ἐξουσίαν διαιροῦν τὰ χαρίσματα (113,15) καθὼς βούλεται, εὐεργετῇ δὲ ζῶνι χαριζόμενον, ἐλεεῖ λυτρούμενον, θεοποιεῖ θεῷ προσάγον, υἱοθετεῖ Χριστῷ προσοικειοῦν βασιλείαν δωρούμενον, τὸ νεκρὸν ἀνίστησιν, τὸν πεπτωκότα ἐγείρει, τὸν πεπλανημένον εἰς εὐθείαν καθίστησιν, τῷ ἐστῶτι φυλάσσει τὴν διαμονήν, τὸν ἀποθανόντα εἰς (113,20) ἀνάστασιν ἄγει. ἄρα μικρὰ ταῦτα καὶ οὐδεμιᾶς χάριτος ἄξια; οὐκοῦν εἰπάτωσαν τὰ τούτων ἀνώτερα, ὧν ἀμέτοχόν ἐστι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, δι' ὃ νομίζουσι καὶ τοῦ προσκυνεῖσθαι ἀνάξιον.

7.6.2 Translation

(111,25) And what mode of worship do they think is reserved uniquely for God? Do we say it in words or perform it with a gesture? But both these are also true of worship given to humans. After all, in the case of humans, words are said and gestures performed. So then, what is unique to God? But it is clear to everyone with any share of reason that human nature does not possess a gift worthy of God. For “our maker has no need of our good things.” (Ps LXX 15:2)

But we human beings (112) establish ways of showing honor and affection for one another, showing one to be inferior to another by acknowledging the neighbor's superiority; these ways of showing honor we adapt for doing service to the greater nature by presenting whatever is valuable in ourselves to the nature that is invaluable. This is why, when humans approach kings or rulers, they do not merely bring to those in power their request for the things they wish to attain from the rulers. Rather, they seek as much as possible to entice the rulers into sympathy and goodwill toward them. They are humble in speech. They worship with a posture. They grasp the knees [of the ruler] and fall on the ground. As an advocate for their request, they put forth every type of lament one can use to arouse pity. Therefore, those who know the true power, by which all things are governed, approach it for those things which they hold dear. Those lowly in soul approach it for the goods pursued in this world; those lofty in mind for the eternal and mysterious goods they hope for. Since they do not know how to ask and human nature is incapable of making any display of reverence which extends to the majesty of God's glory, they have adapted the mode of worship customary among humans for honoring the divine. Indeed, this is worship: the request for something one desires that takes place with supplication and humility. In accordance with this, Daniel bowed his knees to the Lord, asking his mercy on the sinful people. (cf. Dan 6:11, 9:3) And he who bore our weaknesses and pleaded on our behalf through the human being whom he assumed is said by the gospel to fall on his face in the hour of prayer. (Mt 26:39) He made his prayer with this posture, I think, to set the standard for human life, (113) that at the time of our request, we ought not speak with presumption, but must in every way adopt a pitiable demeanor, since "the Lord opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (Prov 3:34; Jas 4:6; 1Pet 5:5) and "everyone who exalts himself will be humbled." (Lk 14:11, 18:14; see Mt 23:12)

So, if worship is, as it were, a kind of supplication, which is put forth with the goal of attaining some request, and the request comes before the one who has authority to distribute it, then what does this new legislation [of theirs] mean? I cannot see why they do not make a request of the giver, nor bow to the one who governs, nor serve the one who holds power, nor worship the ruler. After all, no one is so estranged from himself and from the Spirit that he would not agree with the claim that all these names are observed in connection with the Holy Spirit. For the one that by nature is "ruler" (Ps LXX 50:14, 142:10; Jn 16:13) rules, the one that "produces all things in all" (1Cor 12:6, 11) holds power, and the one that authoritatively "distributes the gifts as it wishes" (1Cor 12:4, 11) possesses authority. It benefits us by giving us life. It shows us mercy by redeeming us. It makes us gods by bringing us to God. It adopts us by bringing us into affinity with Christ and giving us the kingdom. It raises the dead, lifts up the fallen, and

sets the wanderer on the right path. It keeps the one standing firm steadfast; it brings the one who has died to the resurrection. So then, are these trivial and worthy of no honor at all? Let them then tell us the things superior to these, the things in which the Holy Spirit has no share, which is why they consider him unworthy of being worshiped.

7.6.3 Paraphrase

Human beings have nothing that could serve as a gift worthy of God, because nothing can be added to God's honour. True worship is to make supplication, in which the worshippers show themselves to be fully dependent on God's mercy. The Spirit is deserving of being worshipped in this way, because he is the distributor of God's gifts of grace.

7.6.4 Sub-questions

What accusation does Gregory make against the Pneumatomachi?

Having come to the end of his fourth response, Gregory accuses his opponents of introducing new-fangled laws that seem incomprehensible to him. His opponents are not prepared to direct supplication to the giver, to honour and worship the ruler. This is evident from the fact that they refuse to worship, that is to make supplication to, the Spirit, who is, after all, the ruler and the distributor of gifts. In refusing to acknowledge the Spirit as the giver and ruler, they have become enemies of themselves and of the Spirit. Gregory has directed this accusation of introducing new-fangled laws against his opponents before. The accusation here is a logical consequence of the accusation made in *Maced* GNO III.I. 95,7–9 that his opponents are new dogmatists who develop new-fangled doctrines. They prohibit the confession of the Spirit as equal in honour and dignity. If the Spirit is equal to the Father and the Son in honour and dignity, then the homages that are rendered to the Father and the Son are also fitting for the Spirit. In comparison with the accusation made in *Maced* GNO III.I. 95,7–9, in which human intelligence and the appropriate logic play the main role, Gregory here adds an important element: Scripture, even the Lord Jesus Christ himself, show that meekness is an expression of worship that leads to supplication. It is clear from this that Gregory's opponents, through their new-fangled doctrines (τῆς καινῆς τὰύτης νομοθεσίας, *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,7), oppose the Lord Jesus himself, who sets the standard for human life: νομοθετῶν τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ ζωῇ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 112,29.

At the very end of his fourth response, Gregory in a rhetorical admonition challenges his opponents to mention things superior to all the divine gifts, but in the distribution of which the Spirit is not involved. The absurdity of their position is here finally laid bare.

What is adoration?

Worship from one person to another is expressed by the homage that is customary between people in word and gesture and that is characterised by the purpose of the homage. Homage is accompanied by a request from the persons who give homage to a fellow human being they acknowledge to be of higher rank, to receive privileges or gifts from the latter. In support of this request, people are accustomed to humble themselves in their speech and their gestures and to support their request for mercy by paying gifts of honour that arouse mercy, so that their request may be granted.³³⁸

In the case of the worship of God, that is adoration, the homage that is customary among human beings is transferred to the divine. Even though human beings realise that they cannot add anything to the honour of the divine, which possesses the fullness of honour and dignity, yet human beings, submissively making their supplications to God, add human gifts of honour to their supplication. Thus they give the kind of homage that is customary among human beings, because there is no homage they could give that would be appropriate to the divine. The core of this homage is human submission to God, which is visible in gestures and audible in words, and dependence on God's mercy which is thus demonstrated and expressed, together with the supplication to receive divine gifts.

Gregory distinguishes between two groups of people who give honour to God. They are distinct as regards the nature of their souls and the corresponding nature of what they desire. Persons whose souls are still at a lower level, stand up for things that are important to the world, unlike persons whose thoughts are focused on the eternal and ineffable forms of hope.³³⁹ Gregory

338 Fred S. Naiden has written an important monograph on supplication to people in ancient Mediterranean civilisations (esp. the Greeks and Romans): *Ancient Supplication*, Oxford 2006. On pp. 44–47, in the section on 'gestures', he also discusses the clasp of the knees of which Gregory speaks: *καὶ γονάτων ἄπτονται* (*Maced GNO III.1. 112,11*). It is clear in Homer that the force of life is in the knees, see for instance *Iliad* 5, 175–176, where Aineias tells Pandaros about Diomedes who killed many Trojans: *ἐπεὶ πολλῶν τε καὶ ἐσθλῶν γούνατ' ἔλυσεν*. RICHARD B. ONIANS, *The Origins of European Thought about the Body, the Mind, the Soul, the World, Time and Fate*, Cambridge 1951, 174–186 (the section on *The Knees*), speaks of knees as "the seat of paternity, life, generative power". It is through the knees that the supplicant connects with the lifeblood of the addressee.

339 ROWAN A. GREER, *Christian Hope and Christian Life. Raids on the Inarticulate*, New York 2001, in chapter 2 (pp. 64–111), *Gregory of Nyssa. The New Creation*, describes Gregory's threefold form of hope: thanks to the resurrection, we become part of the renewed creation; thanks to our redeemed state, we continue to grow in our desire for God, the *epektasis*; redeemed and resurrected, we share in Christ's corporative human condition, the *pleroma*.

nevertheless connects these two groups in their common insight that God has dominion over all things that are, and their shared inability to give any kind of honour to the divine that would even approach the divine glory.

What assistance does Scripture offer in defining adoration?

Scripture helps Gregory to describe the true nature of adoration: human beings who, fully dependent on God's mercy, visibly submit to God, fall on their knees and make supplication to God, a petition for something that is important to them. In the case of two examples from Scripture, the worshippers in question plead the case of their fellow human beings before God. These two examples from Scripture of people falling on their knees show that true adoration is a kind of supplication that includes the acknowledgement of human dependence. It is supplication to the Lord who distributes his heavenly gifts.

The first example is Daniel, a Jewish exile appointed to the high position of satrap at the Persian-Median court, who was discovered on his knees praying to God, something that had been forbidden by King Darius (Dan LXX 6:11 καὶ ἐπιπτεν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ), and who was subsequently cast into the lions' den and then saved. In the continuation of this book (Dan LXX 9:3 καὶ ἔδωκα τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ἐπὶ κύριον τὸν θεὸν εὐρεῖν προσευχὴν καὶ ἔλεος ἐν νηστείαις καὶ σάκκῳ καὶ σποδῷ), Daniel pleads the case of his people, which is being held captive as prisoners of war, and he pleads with God for mercy for his people: ἐπὶ τοῦ αἰχμαλώτου λαοῦ τὴν φιλανθρωπίαν αἰτούμενος (*Maced* GNO III.I. 112,24–25).

The second example is Jesus himself, who in the Garden of Gethsemane fell on his face (Mt 26:39 ἔπεσεν ἐπὶ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ), thus giving the example per excellence of human submission to God, expressing his humble appeal to God's mercy through the posture of his body. Gregory shows that Jesus pleaded for his fellow human beings in the description he gives of Jesus, whose name he does not mention:

And he who bore our weaknesses and pleaded on our behalf through the human being whom he assumed is said by the gospel (Mt 26:39) to fall on his face in the hour of prayer.

Maced GNO III.I. 112,25–28

In sum, Scripture teaches that adoration is a form of supplication accompanied by the visible meekness of the praying and worshipping human beings: they fall on their knees or fall on their face. In Scripture it is Jesus, Gregory believes, who sets the standard for human life: (νομοθετῶν, οἱμαί, τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ ζωῇ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 112,29) by humbling himself in the moment of prayer.

What characteristics of the Spirit entitle the Spirit to adoration as it has just been defined?

Gregory accuses his opponents of introducing a new-fangled law: to withhold adoration from him who gives (τοῦ διδόντος, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,8*), rules (τῷ ἄρχοντι, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,9*), holds power (τὸν δυναστεύοντα, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,9*) and possesses authority (τὸν ἡγούμενον, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,10*), despite the fact that it is reasonable to address the Holy Spirit in these terms. In a subsequent, doubly chiasmic hymn of praise, Gregory first develops the aspect of the Spirit who holds power, and then shows the Spirit as the giver of life and of all good things. The great importance that Gregory attaches to this praise of the Holy Spirit is evident from the carefully structured rhetorical form of this hymn of praise, which is characterised by a chiasmic structure with asyndetic and paratactic cola.³⁴⁰ Even the hymn of praise as a whole is chiasmic (*chiasmus maior*): giving (τοῦ διδόντος, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,8*) and being Lord (τῷ ἄρχοντι, τὸν δυναστεύοντα, τὸν ἡγούμενον, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,9–10*) correspond crosswise with being Lord (ἡγείται μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, δυναστεύει, ἐξουσιάζει, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,12–14*) and giving (εὐεργετεί δὲ ζωὴν χαρίζόμενον ... τὸν ἀποθανόντα εἰς ἀνάστασιν ἄγει, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,15–20*). Gregory also chiasmically develops the aspect of being Lord, one of the two elements of the overarching chiasm (*chiasmus minor*): ruling (τῷ ἄρχοντι, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,9*), holding power (τὸν δυναστεύοντα, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,9*) and possessing authority (τὸν ἡγούμενον, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,10*) correspond crosswise with possessing authority (ἡγείται μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἡγεμονικόν, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,12–13*), holding power (δυναστεύει, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,13*) and ruling (ἐξουσιάζει, *Maced GNO III.I. 113, 14*).

The importance that Gregory attaches to this hymn of praise may be due to the fact that this hymn corresponds perfectly with the two terms that precede the affirmation in the Creed of Constantinople of 381 that the Holy Spirit together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified (τὸ σὺν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ συμπροσκυνούμενον καὶ συνδοξαζόμενον): he is Lord and gives life (τὸ κύριον καὶ τὸ ζωοποιόν). It is precisely these two characteristics of the Spirit that Gregory develops here.

The Spirit's quality of Lord, which is introduced with the words τῷ ἄρχοντι, τὸν δυναστεύοντα, τὸν ἡγούμενον, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,9–10*, is developed chiasmic-

340 WERNER JAEGER, *Gregor von Nyssa's Lehre*, 46–47: "Diese Aufzählung der Tätigkeiten des Geistes in kurzen, asyndetischen Kola, parataktisch aneinandergereiht, hat hymnischen Charakter, und es gibt zahlreiche formelle Vorbilder für sie in der hymnischen Poesie der Griechen, die bis in die ältesten Zeiten zurückreichen. Es ist offenbar ein Höhepunkt in Gregors Beweisführung erreicht, wo das vorher rational Bewiesene noch einmal siegreich zu zusammenfassender Anschauung kommt."

ally (in the *chiasmus minor*) in the following manner. Beginning with ἡγείται μὲν γὰρ τὸ ἡγεμονικόν (*Maced GNO III.I. 113,12–13*), he repeats here what was said in *Maced GNO III.I. 104,1–2* about the Spirit: ὅτι καὶ ἡγεμονικόν ἐστι καὶ ὑποχείριον. εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἡγείται, οὐ κυριεύεται. With regard to God who rules, Gregory uses ἡγεομαι only for the Spirit. Similarly, Gregory uses τὸ ἡγεμονικόν primarily, if not exclusively, for the Spirit, with a reference to Scripture, Ps LXX 50:14b καὶ πνεύματι ἡγεμονικῶ στήρισόν με, as he did previously in *Maced GNO III.I. 97,11* and 103,29. In the explicit reference to Ps LXX 50 in *Ref Eun GNO II. 395,19–24*, Gregory connects the Psalmist with the Apostle Paul: the Spirit as ruling principle is evident from his power to distribute:

But like the prophet (sc. David) calls the Holy Spirit good and just and ruling, giving proof of his rule by ruling, so the Apostle (sc. Paul) witnesses in relation to the dignity of the Spirit to his autonomous power, in his observation that the Spirit works all things in all as he wills.³⁴¹

It is evident that the Spirit holds power (δυναστεύει, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,13*) from the qualifying addition τὸ πάντα ἐνεργοῦν ἐν πᾶσιν (*Maced GNO III.I. 113,13–14*). Again, Gregory paraphrases Paul in the twelfth chapter of 1 Cor 12:11 (πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα, διαιροῦν ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται), as he did before in *Maced GNO III.I. 97,10–11*, *Maced GNO III.I. 99,15* and *Maced GNO III.I. 109,18*. Finally, in *Maced GNO III.I. 114,7–9* the Spirit's giving of all good things is substantivised and used as one of the names of the Spirit:

the one who rules, who exercises lordship, and who has authority and who activates all the good things in the entire creation.

Maced GNO III.I. 114,7–9

What is striking about Gregory's use of δυναστεύει in *Maced GNO III.I. 113,13* is its absolute form, without object or adverbial addition, as finite verb. This is the only place in which Gregory uses δυναστεύειν in this way, specifically applied to the Holy Spirit.³⁴²

In using ἐξουσιάζει (*Maced GNO III.I. 113,14*), Gregory adds a term to his description of the power of the Spirit that does not occur prior to this in this

341 *Ref Eun GNO II. 395,19–24*: ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ὁ προφήτης ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐθὲς καὶ ἡγεμονικὸν ὀνομάζει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, διὰ τοῦ ἡγεμονικοῦ τὸ ἀρχικὸν ἐνδεικνύμενος, οὕτω καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν ἐνεργεῖν καθὼς βούλεται διοριζόμενος τὴν αὐθεντικὴν ἐξουσίαν προσμαρτυρεῖ τῇ ἀξίᾳ τοῦ πνεύματος.

342 See *Lexicon Gregorianum II*, col. 540c.

work. Here, too, he uses a qualifying addition: τὸ κατ' ἐξουσίαν διαιροῦν τὰ χαρίσματα καθὼς βούλεται (*Maced* GNO III.I. 113,14–15). This description is another quotation from Paul's 1 Cor 12:11 (πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα, διαιροῦν ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται), but on this occasion Gregory for the first time adds the word διαιροῦν which Paul used, extending it with the object of the giving: the divine gifts of grace, τὰ χαρίσματα: τὸ κατ' ἐξουσίαν διαιροῦν τὰ χαρίσματα καθὼς βούλεται (*Maced* GNO III.I. 113,14–15). Whereas Gregory limited χάρισμα to the divine gift of life in *Maced* GNO III.I. 106,15, 16 and 19, here he widens the concept by using the plural as an addition to the Pauline διαιροῦν. There is a good reason for this, because subsequently, in the second part of the *chiasmus maior*, Gregory lists the gifts of the Spirit, with the gift of life at the top of the list.

This *chiasmus maior* reflects the entire set-up of *Maced*: from the Spirit who rules with God, through the divine gift, first and foremost of life, to the saving work of the Spirit who brings the dead back to life, who brings them to new life in God.

Gregory begins the second part of the *chiasmus maior*, characterised by alternation between -ει verb endings (εὐεργετεῖ, ἐλεεῖ, θεοποιεῖ, υἱοθετεῖ, ἐγείρει, φυλάσσει, ἄγει which rhyme with δυναστεύει and ἐξουσιάζει from the first part of the *chiasmus maior*) and -σιν verb endings (ἀνίστησιν, καθίστησιν), with the Spirit as the beneficent giver of life: εὐεργετεῖ δὲ ζωὴν χαριζόμενον (*Maced* GNO III.I. 113,15). In *Maced* GNO III.I. 109,30, the Spirit had already been called εὐεργέτης, as the giver of the good things (τὸν τῶν ἀγαθῶν παρεκτικόκν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 109,30).

Gregory then specifies. In the first place, the Spirit, as redeemer, is merciful (ἐλεεῖ λυτρούμενον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,15–16). The addition λυτρούμενον connects the Spirit's work of mercy with Christ's work of redemption; Christ who is often designated with the verb λυτρόομαι: it is he who has redeemed human beings from sin and death, as in *Perf* GNO VIII.I. 185,16 and *Ref Eun* GNO II. 319,24. Gregory then continues the hymn of praise with a statement specifically about the Spirit: "he divinises by leading to God" (θεοποιεῖ θεῷ προσάγον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,16).³⁴³ Whereas in *Virg* (GNO VIII.I. 252,8) and in *Beat*

343 Gregory uses θεοποιεῖν in the sense of deification in his praise of virginity *Virg* GNO VIII.I. 252,8 and in his exegesis of the beatitude of Matt. 5:7: the merciful will receive divine dignity, Jesus explains, because God himself is merciful (Δοκεῖ οὖν μοι θεοποιεῖν τρόπον τινὰ διὰ τῆς κατὰ τὸ ἀκόλουθον προκειμένης τοῦ μακαρισμοῦ ὑψηλῆς τὸν ἀκούοντά τε καὶ συνιέντα τοῦ λόγου. Μακάριοι γάρ, φησὶν, οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται, *Beat V* GNO VII.II. 124,16–19). THOMAS BÖHM, Gregor von Nyssa, *De Beatitudinibus*, Oratio v: "Selig sind die Barmherzigen, denn Sie werden Barmherzigkeit erlangen" (Mt 5,7), in: HUBERTUS R. DROB-

(GNO VII.II. 124,16) he qualifies this by adding ‘so to speak’, *τρόπον τινά*, he does not do this here.³⁴⁴ But the qualification *θεῶ προσάγον* does immediately clarify in what sense Gregory uses the concept of divinisation. This addition is noteworthy, because in this case it is the Spirit who leads to God, whereas elsewhere it is either people who lead other people to God, or Christ himself who leads people to the Father.³⁴⁵ In *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 86,11–13, Gregory reveals the sacramental dimension of divinisation; baptism and the Eucharist allow people to share in the divinisation of Christ’s body.³⁴⁶ It is thanks to the incarnation of Christ that human beings, as physical beings, can be united to the divine nature physically, and this through the nourishment of the Eucharist.³⁴⁷

NER & ALBERT VICIANO (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 1998* (VCS 52), Leiden 2000, 165–183, p. 176 comments: “Angesichts der philosophischen Problematik, wie sie eingangs exemplarisch anhand von Platon, Aristoteles und der Stoa aufgezeigt wurde, und der Auslegungstradition von Mt 5,7 ist eine solche Sichtweise ungewöhnlich.”

344 NORMAN RUSSELL, *The Doctrine*, on pp. 126–127 does mention these passages in *Virg* and *Beat*, but does not mention *Maced* and thus also misses the role of the Spirit in deification. He comments on p. 229: “the deification of human beings by participation in the divine attributes is deification in a strictly analogous sense.” MARTIN LAIRD, *Gregory of Nyssa and Divinization: A Reconsideration*, in: J. BAUN ET AL. (ed.), *Studia Patristica* 47 (2010) 39–43 (*Cappadocian Writers*), rejects Russell’s view and attempts on the basis of images in *Cant* (“theological imagery”, p. 39, and of texts that use the “technical language of divinization”, p. 43) to demonstrate that for Gregory deification goes further than imperfect participation in God’s life. I do not believe there is any opposition between the technical language in dogmatic works such as *Maced* and metaphors such as those used in *Cant*. Laird overestimates the use of images as a defining aspect of Gregory’s view of deification. In his PhD thesis, Chieran John points to the role of the Holy Spirit in the deification of human beings: CHERIAN JOHN, *Being Human Becoming Divine: A Sacramentological Re-interpretation of Theosis on Micro-macrocosmic*, PhD Leuven 2008 (<http://hdl.handle.net/1979/1880>), 72: “Gregory of Nyssa pertinently states that the Holy Spirit unites the Created and the Uncreated. The sacraments essentially unite both the created and the Uncreated through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Person of the Holy Spirit is the Giver of grace, which is uncreated grace and by its very nature it is divine.” The title of chapter 3 (p. 215 ff.) is: “Sacramental metamorphosis as pneumatization”.

345 In *Ep can* GNO III.V. 1,13, ministers of the Church, including Gregory, lead people to God; in *Tunc et ipse* GNO III.II. 27,25–28,3, Christ brings people to God; through Christ we have access to the Father in one Spirit: τὸ γὰρ παραδόναι αὐτον τῷ πατρὶ τὴν βασιλείαν ταῦτόν ἐστι κατὰ τὴν διάνοιαν τῷ προσαγαγεῖν τοὺς πάντας τῷ θεῷ, δι’ οὗ ἔχομεν τὴν προσαγωγὴν ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα.

346 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 86,11–13: ἵνα διὰ τῆς ἀναληφθείσης παρ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ συναποθεωθείσης σαρκὸς ἅπαν συνδιασωθῇ τὸ συγγενές αὐτῇ καὶ ὁμόφυλον.

347 LENKA KARFIKOVÁ, *Gnadenlehre*, 388. CHERIAN JOHN, *Being Human Becoming Divine*, 65: “Gregory of Nyssa presents the dynamic participation of the human person in the

In view of Christ's essential role in the redemption of human beings, the following characteristic of the Spirit is a logical one. The Spirit adopts (υιοθετεῖ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,16) human beings by connecting them with Christ (Χριστῷ προσοικειοῦν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,16–17). The adoption takes place through the bestowing of kingship (βασιλείαν δωρούμενον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,17). Only here, and in *Bapt* GNO X.II. 365,19 (τῷ καταλόγῳ τῶν υιοθετουμένων), does Gregory use the verb υιοθετέω; only here, in *Maced*, it is the Spirit who brings about the adoption, possibly inspired by Paul, who in his epistle to the Romans 8:23 (τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος ἔχοντες ἡμεῖς καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς στενάζομεν υιοθεσίαν ἀπεκδεχόμενοι, τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν) connects waiting eagerly for the adoption with possessing the first-fruits of the Spirit. It is the Spirit, Paul writes in Rom 8:15–16, who enables human beings to cry out: *Abba, Father*. It is the Spirit who assures us that we are children of God:

But you received the Spirit of adoption, in whom we cry out *Abba, Father*. The Spirit himself bears witness before our spirit that we are children of God.³⁴⁸

In *Cant* IV GNO VI. 115,13–16, Gregory refers to the Spirit of adoption, whose doing it is that the bride becomes the Son's sister:

which is why she is named the Son's sister when she has been adopted by 'the Spirit of sonship' [Rom 8:15] into this kinship and has been delivered from fellowship with the daughters of the 'father' falsely so called.³⁴⁹

The adoption through which people are connected with Christ is wrought through the Spirit, who establishes the connection with Christ, and does this by bestowing the kingship. This means the Spirit gives himself as a gift, because a few lines before in *Maced*, Gregory has called the Spirit the living, substantial

Incarnation itself through the mediation of the sacrament of baptism and the Eucharist. He speaks of the participation in divine life as the union with immortality through the sacraments." The title of chapter four (p. 267 ff.) is: "The sacramental metamorphosis as becoming divine: an act of divine-human-cosmic interpenetration towards trinitarian communion."

348 Rom 8:15–16: ἀλλὰ ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υιοθεσίας, ἐν ᾧ κρίζομεν, αββὰ ὁ πατήρ· αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν ὅτι ἐσμέν τέκνα θεοῦ.

349 *Cant* IV GNO VI. 115,13–16: διὸ καὶ ἀδελφὴ τοῦ υἱοῦ ὀνομάζεται τῷ τῆς υιοθεσίας πνεύματι πρὸς τὴν συγγένειαν ταύτην εἰσποιηθεῖσα καὶ τῆς πρὸς τὰς θυγατέρας τοῦ ψευδωνύμου πατρὸς κοινωνίας ἀπαλλαγείσα (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

and personified kingship (βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος, *Maced GNO III.I. 102,27–28*). This is because the king's anointing oil is the dignity of kingship. The Spirit is the anointing oil with which the Only-Begotten One has been anointed, as Gregory argues in *Maced GNO III.I. 102,31–103,1*:

The notion (ἔννοια) of anointing intimates through riddles (δι' ἀπορρήτων αἰνίσσεται) that there is no gap between the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Anointed with this kingship, the Only-Begotten One is the Anointed One and king of all that is. By giving himself, the Spirit connects human beings with Christ and adopts human beings as sons and daughters of God, as royal sons and daughters. The distance that separates human beings and the Son is bridged by the Spirit's gift of self, and it is thus that the Spirit brings human beings to God.

In view of the Spirit's gift of self, Gregory can now continue to say that the Spirit brings the dead to life (τὸ νεκρὸν ἀνίστησιν, *Maced GNO III.I. 113, 17*). This statement is a variation on the important qualification of the Spirit in the Creed of Constantinople of 381: ζωοποιόν.³⁵⁰ Gregory uses this epithet of the Spirit that describes him as participating in the one divine power that creates life no fewer than eight times, first and foremost at the intersecting point of the work, in his exposé on the life-creating force of the baptismal water (ἐν τῷ ὕδατι ἡ ζωοποιός ἐστι δύναμις, *Maced GNO III.I. 105,23*).

Gregory then explains what the dead is that the Spirit raises to life; and at the same time he shows how death and sin are linked:

It (sc. the Spirit) raises the dead, lifts up the fallen, and sets the wanderer on the right path. It keeps the one standing firm steadfast; it brings the one who has died to the resurrection.

Maced GNO III.I. 113,17–20

Only here does Gregory connect the concept of falling with the Spirit who lifts up the fallen; in other places in Gregory's oeuvre, it is God or Christ who lifts up the fallen.³⁵¹ Gregory appears to play on the combination of falling, death and raising up, and to vary, in this case on the basis of Jn 5:21 (ὥσπερ γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ἐγεί-

³⁵⁰ See p. 238 note 296.

³⁵¹ As in *Sanct Pasch GNO IX. 247,1–4*, with a quotation from Ps LXX 116:1: Αἰνεῖτε τὸν κύριον πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, ἐπαινέσατε αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ λαοί. αἰνέσατε ὡς δυνατόν, ἐπαινέσατε ὡς φιλόανθρωπον, ὅτι πεσόντας καὶ νεκροὺς ὄντας αὐθις ἐζωοποίησε. Here, too, there is the connection between death and fall, together with bringing to life, in this case by the Lord.

ρει τοὺς νεκροὺς καὶ ζωοποιεῖ, οὕτως καὶ ὁ υἱὸς οὗς θέλει ζωοποιεῖ). Earlier in *Maced GNO III.I. 106,1*, Gregory had already quoted this passage from Scripture. The reference to setting the wanderer on the right path is an allusion to Is LXX 53:6 (πάντες ὡς πρόβατα ἐπλανήθημεν, ἄνθρωπος τῇ ὁδῷ αὐτοῦ ἐπλανήθη) and to the related Scriptural passages from the New Testament, specifically the parable of the one lost sheep in Mt 18:12 (καὶ πορευθεὶς ζητεῖ τὸ πλανώμενον) and the cursing of the false teachers in 2Pet 2:15 (καταλείποντες εὐθείαν ὁδὸν ἐπλανήθησαν).

The reference to keeping the person who stands firm steadfast offers a perspective on the steadfastness of the divine nature, in contrast with the changeability of human nature which is prone to falling. Changeable human beings are called to receive the divine steadfastness. In *Or cat GNO III.IV. 9,8–11*, Gregory juxtaposes human nature and its perishable logos with the divine nature and its eternal and unchanging Logos:

But just as our nature, by being perishable, has a speech which is perishable, so the incorruptible and eternal nature (αἰεὶ ἐστῶσα φύσις) has a speech which is eternal and substantial.³⁵²

In the continuation of *Or cat GNO III.IV. 78,17–19*, where Gregory speaks about the death and resurrection of Christ in relation to our fallen human nature, he brings natural theology and revelation together in the following way:

If, then, he who stands upright stoops to raise up one who has fallen, what is there in our religious teaching which is outside the realm of probability?³⁵³

The steadfast person's steadfastness corresponds with the idea of human beings as the (restored) image of God.³⁵⁴ In *Vit Moys GNO VII.I. 118,3–8*, he

352 *Or cat GNO III.IV. 9,8–11*: ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἡ ἡμετέρα φύσις ἐπικηρος οὖσα καὶ ἐπικηρον τὸν λόγον ἔχει, οὕτως ἡ ἀφθαρτος καὶ αἰεὶ ἐστῶσα φύσις αἰδίων ἔχει καὶ ὑφ'εστώτα τὸν λόγον (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

353 *Or cat GNO III.IV. 78,17–19*: τί οὖν ἔξω τοῦ εἰκότος ἐν τῷ μυστηρίῳ μανθάνομεν, εἰ κύπτει πρὸς τὸν πεπτωκότα ὁ ἐστὼς ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνορθῶσαι τὸν κείμενον; (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

354 Basil shows the extent to which steadfastness and likeness of God belong together in *De Spiritu Sancto IX 23*. The Spirit-bearing souls, illumined by the Spirit (αἱ πνευματοφόροι ψυχαὶ ἐλλαμφθεῖσαι παρὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος, IX 23,18–19), receive such things as the ability to remain in God and likeness with God (ἡ ἐν Θεῷ διαμονή, ἡ πρὸς Θεὸν ὁμοίωσις, IX 24). Basil says of the Spirit in *De Spiritu Sancto* that he remains together with the Son and the Father without end (ἄπαυστος διαμονή μεθ' Υἱοῦ καὶ Πατρὸς θεωρουμένη, xxvi 63,6–7).

addresses the paradoxical aspect of standing firm in the good and ascending towards God. Standing firm in the good, standing on the Rock (Exodus 33:22), that is Christ, who is perfect Virtue (ἡ πέτρα δέ ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός, ἡ παντελὴς ἀρετὴ, *Vit Moys*, GNO VIII. 118,20), means moving upwards, along the path of virtue:

This is the most marvelous thing of all: how the same thing is both a standing still and a moving. For he who ascends certainly does not stand still, and he who stands still does not move upwards. But here the ascent takes place by means of the standing. I mean by this that the firmer and more immovable one remains in the Good, the more he progresses in the course of virtue (cf. 2 Tim 4:7).³⁵⁵

Here in *Maced*, it is the Spirit who keeps this steadfastness (which is of God) firm.

Gregory concludes this poetic hymn of praise of the Spirit with the crowning glory of the Spirit's work: "it (sc. the Spirit) brings the one who has died to the resurrection." (*Maced* GNO III.I. 113,19–20). Gregory refers here to Paul's epistle to the Rom 8:11:

εἰ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἐγείραντος τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν οἰκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν, ὁ ἐγείρας Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ζωοποιήσκει καὶ τὰ θνητὰ σώματα ὑμῶν διὰ τοῦ ἐνοικούντος αὐτοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ὑμῖν.

355 *Vit Moys* GNO VIII. 118,3–8: Τοῦτο δὴ τὸ πάντων παραδοξότατον, πῶς τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ στάσις ἐστὶ καὶ κίνησις. ὁ γὰρ ἀνίων πάντως οὐχ ἴσταται καὶ ὁ ἐστὼς οὐκ ἀνέρχεται, ἐνταῦθα δὲ διὰ τοῦ ἐστάναι τὸ ἀναβῆναι γίνεται· τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶν ὅτι ὅσῳ τις παγίως τε καὶ ἀμεταθέτως ἐν τῷ ἀγαθῷ διαμένει, τοσοῦτῳ πλέον τὸν τῆς ἀρετῆς διανύει δρόμον (transl. by ABRAHAM J. MALBERBE & EVERETT FERGUSON). ANDREAS SPIRA, *Le temps d'un homme selon Aristote et Grégoire de Nysse: stabilité et instabilité dans la pensée grecque*, in: JEAN-MARIE LEROUX (ed.), *Le Temps chrétien de la fin de l'Antiquité au Moyen Âge (IIIe–XIIIe siècles), Colloques internationaux du Centre national de la recherche scientifique Paris 1981*, Paris 1984, 283–294 (included in: ANDREAS SPIRA, *Kleine Schriften zu Antike und Christentum / Menschenbild—Rhetorik—Gregor van Nyssa*, herausgegeben von HUBERTUS R. DROBNER, Frankfurt am Main 2007, 315–326), contrasts Gregory's view of time and movement with that of Aristotle, on the basis, among other things, of this central passage in *Vit Moys*. In the same volume edited by JEAN-MARIE LEROUX (ed.), pp. 255–261, M.A. BARDOLLE, *La Vie de Moïse de Grégoire de Nysse ou le temps spirituel vécu à travers l'imaginaire d'un modèle historique*, demonstrates that Gregory regarded time as a duration of time which makes maturation towards perfection possible.

In *Epist* v, Gregory emphasises that all three divine persons are involved in the grace of the resurrection (ἡ τῆς ἀναστάσεως χάρις, *Epist* v GNO VIII.II. 32,27–33,1), which reaches human beings through baptism in the name of the Father and the Son and the Spirit. Here, in *Maced*, in this hymn of praise to the Spirit, Gregory affords the central role to the Spirit, who brings the dead to life.

How does Gregory conclude his fourth and last response?

At the end of his fourth response (the Spirit, beside the Father and the Son, is deserving of adoration, that is supplication for mercy by worshippers who show their total dependence on God's mercy), Gregory challenges his opponents. If the Spirit is the distributor of God's gifts of grace, if he even brings human beings back to life, then his opponents, if they are to prove that the Spirit is not deserving of being adored together with Father and Son, should mention things that are superior to these gifts of the Spirit but which have nothing to do with the Spirit. Gregory stresses the coherence between the attributes of the Spirit in the Creed of Constantinople and deploys this coherence in his argument: being Lord and creating life (τὸ κύριον, τὸ ζωοποιόν) lead to the Spirit being worshipped together with the Father and the Son (τὸ σὺν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ συμπροσκυνούμενον καὶ συνδοξαζόμενον).³⁵⁶ Gregory concludes his fourth and last response by emphasising this central role that the Spirit plays in the *reditus* of human beings to God. He is now ready to draw his final conclusion.

356 ANTHONY MEREDITH, *The Pneumatology*, 210, concludes with regard to the major role that Gregory played in formulating the additions concerning the Spirit in the Creed of Constantinople: "It is perhaps only in the *proskunesis* of C. (sc. Creed of Constantinople) that it goes beyond Basil and in this decidedly unambiguous expression of adoration we are not far from the language of Gregory in *Adv. Maced.* 24. If this is true, then the latter's belief in the full deity of the Spirit has had a decided effect on Faith." There appears to be no doubt that Gregory played a decisive role at this council in relation to the definition of the Holy Spirit. Whether or not he was the author of the additions to the Nicene Creed that relate to the Holy Spirit, a point of debate between Gregorian scholars, is a question that I believe cannot currently be settled.

8 The Answer of Gregory: The Conclusion: Freedom of Choice as Praise and Gift Offered to the Unknowable Greatness of the Trinity of Which the Spirit Is Part

8.1 *Christians Have Only Their Freedom of Choice to Offer as Praise of and Gift to the Triune Godhead; No Human Honour Is Commensurate to the Unknowable Greatness of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and It Adds Nothing to Their Incomprehensible Glory*
(GNO III.I. 113,24–115,32)

8.1.1 Greek Text

(113,24) Ἐπειτα κάκεινο παρ' αὐτῶν ἔστι μαθεῖν· ὅταν, ὡς (113,25) οἴονται, τῷ πατρὶ προσκυνῶσιν, ἄρα καθόλου τῆς διανοίας ἑαυτῶν τοῦ τε μονογενοῦς καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος τὴν μνήμην ἐκβάλλουσιν; καὶ μὴ φύσιν οὐκ ἔχει πατέρα ἐννοήσαντα μὴ συνεπινεῖν τὸν υἱὸν καὶ υἱὸν τῇ διανοίᾳ δεξάμενον μὴ συμπεριλαμβάνειν³⁵⁷ μετὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸ πνεῦμα. εἰ μὲν γὰρ (113,30) ἀρνείται καθόλου καὶ ἀθετεῖ τὴν ὁμολογίαν, εἰς τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἢ Σαδδουκαίων ἐστίν, καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἀρνούμενος καὶ τὸ (114,1) πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον μὴ δεχόμενος· εἰ δὲ ὅπως οὖν πρεσβεύειν τὰ τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἐπαγγέλλεται, πάντως ὅτι πατέρα ἐννοῶν καὶ τὸν οὐ ἔστι πατὴρ ἐνενόησε καὶ υἱοῦ τὴν ἔννοιαν ἀναλαβὼν προκατηυγάσθη διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος· Οὐδεὶς γὰρ δύναται (114,5) εἰπεῖν κύριον Ἰησοῦν, εἰ μὴ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ. οὐκοῦν ὁ ἀληθινὸς προσκυνητὴς ἀποστάς τῆς σωματικῆς ταύτης καὶ χαμαιζήλου ταπεινότητος τῶν νοημάτων τὸ ἄρχον καὶ τὸ κυριεῦον καὶ τὸ ἐξουσιάζον καὶ τὸ πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἐνεργοῦν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει οὕτω τιμήσει οὐχ ὡς ἐκείνῳ ἄξιον, ἀλλ' (114,10) ὅσον αὐτὸς δυνατὸς ἐστὶ φέρειν κατὰ τὴν χήραν ἐκείνην, ἢ δύο λεπτοὺς ὀβολοὺς δωροφοροῦσα τοῖς ἱεροῖς θησαυροῖς ἀπεδείχθη τῇ³⁵⁸ τῆς φιλοτιμίας, οὐχ ὅτι ἄξιον τι θαύματος εἶχεν ἢ ὕλη, ἀλλ' ὅτι πλέον οὐκ ἐχώρει ἡ δύναμις. οὕτω τοίνυν λογίζεται ὄντως ἔχειν, ὅτι πάντα τὰ παρὰ ἀνθρώπων (114,15) ὅσα εἰς τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν ἐπινενόηται κατώτερα ἐστὶ τῆς μεγαλοπρεπειᾶς τοῦ πνεύματος οὐδεμίαν προσθήκην τῆς δόξης ποιοῦμενα. ἢ μὲν γὰρ ὡσαύτως ἔχει καὶ τιμώντων καὶ μή· ἢ δὲ

357 ANDREW RADDE-GALLWITZ (tr.), Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Holy Spirit against the Macedonian Spirit-Fighters*, 291 n. 91, rejects Fridericus Mueller's correction (συμπεριλαμβάνειν instead of συμπαράλαμβάνειν in the Burney MS) and points to *Maced* GNO III.I. 110,26 (συμπαρεδέξω): "Reading συμπαράλαμβάνειν with the Burney MS; this is a common term in Gregory's writings. Mueller conjectures (GNO III.I. 113,29) συμπεριλαμβάνειν. Compare the parallel sentence in above *Maced* GNO III.I. 110,24–26. There a verb of "receiving with" (συμπαρεδέξω) appears in a parallel position to συμπαράλαμβάνειν here. While συμπεριλάβον also appears in that sentence, it is parallel with συνεπινεῖν ("to conceive also") in this sentence, not with συμπαράλαμβάνειν." I accept Fridericus Mueller's point, in view of *Maced* GNO III.I. 110,25, 29; 115,28.

358 In this corrupt place I follow a suggestion by the editor of the text, Fridericus Mueller ("παράδειγμα vel ἀξία vel simile quid"): παράδειγμα.

ἀνθρωπίνη φύσις μόνην δωροφορεῖ τὴν προαίρεσιν, αὐτῷ τῷ θελήσει μόνον πληροῦσα ἢν προέθετο χάριν· (114,20) πλέον δ' ἔτι τοῦ θελήματος καὶ τῆς κατὰ πρόθεσιν ὁρμῆς καὶ κινήσεως ἔχει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει οὐδέν. καὶ θαυμάσαι προέλθεται καὶ ἐπαίνοις τισὶ τὸ μεγαλεῖον ἀποσεμνῦναι τῆς θείας δυνάμεως, οὐ τὴν φύσιν ἐπήνεσεν· πῶς γὰρ ἐπαινέσει τὸ ἀγνοούμενον; ἀλλὰ τι τῶν περὶ αὐτὴν θεωρουμένων ἐδόξασε· (114,25) Γενεὰ γὰρ φησι καὶ γενεὰ ἐπαινέσει τὰ ἔργα σου καὶ τὴν δύνάμιν τῶν φοβερῶν σου καὶ τὴν μεγαλοπρέπειαν τῆς δόξης τῆς ἀγιοσύνης σου καὶ τὰ θαυμάσιά σου καὶ τὴν μνήμην τοῦ πληθους τῆς χρηστότητός σου καὶ τὴν ἐν τούτοις μεγαλωσύνην σου διηγῆσονται. ὁρᾷς ὡς διὰ τῶν ἔξωθεν περὶ (114,30) τὴν θείαν φύσιν θεωρουμένων πληροῦται τῷ προφῆτῃ τὸ θαῦμα; αὐτὴ δὲ ἐκείνη καθὼς ἐστὶ ἡ θεία τε καὶ μακαρία δύναμις ἄβατος καὶ ἀθέατος λογισμοῖς μένει καὶ διανοίας (115,1) πολυπραγμοσύνην καὶ λόγου δύνάμιν καὶ καρδίας κίνησιν καὶ ἐνθυμήσεως ὁρμήν, πάντα κάτω ἑαυτῆς ἀφείσα πολὺ μᾶλλον ἢ ὅσον τὰ σώματα ἡμῖν ἀπολιμπάνεται τῆς τῶν ἀστέρων ἀφῆς. ὁ οὖν ταῦτα εἰδὼς καὶ συνεγνωκὼς ἑαυτῷ (115,5) τὸ οὐτιδανὸν καὶ ἀσθενὲς καὶ πενιχρὸν τῆς φύσεως καταγνώσεται μὲν τῆς ματαιότητος τῶν ἀπὸ οὕτω μικρᾶς καὶ εὐτελοῦς τῆς δυνάμεως οἰομένων ἔχειν τι τῆς ἀξίας τοῦ πνεύματος ὑψηλότερον καὶ φειδομένων ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ῥημάτων τινῶν θεραπευτικῶν ἢ σχημάτων, ἃ εἴτε λατρεῖαν εἴτε (115,10) προσκύνῃσιν σύνηθές τιςιν ὀνομάζειν οὐ διαφέρομαι· ἀναβλέπων δὲ εἰς τὸ ὕψος τῆς δόξης, ἥς ἡ ἀληθὴς κατανόησις τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἀνέφικτος, καταγνώσεται ἑαυτοῦ, καθὼς καὶ ὁ πατριάρχης ἐποίησε τῆς θείας ἀξιοθείας ἐπιφανείας γῆν καὶ σποδὸν ἑαυτὸν προσαγορεύων· οὕτω δὲ διακείμενος (115,15) ὅλον ἑαυτὸν ἀναθήσει τῇ θεραπείᾳ τῆς κρείττονος φύσεως, οὐ τὸ μὲν τι ποιῶν τῶν εἰς τιμὴν συντεινόντων, τοῦ δὲ ἀπεχόμενος, ἀλλὰ πᾶν ὅτιπερ ἂν ἐν τῇ καθ' ἑαυτὸν δυνάμει μείζον καὶ ὑπερέχον εἶναι φανῇ, τοῦτο ἀναθήσει τῷ ἐπὶ πάντων θεῷ, τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν καὶ προσκύνῃσιν τὴν ὑπὸ τῆς (115,20) δυνάμεως χωρουμένην διηνεκῶς ἀναπέμπων τῷ ἔχοντι τοῦ σῶζειν τὴν ἐξουσίαν· σῶζει δὲ ὁ πατὴρ καὶ ὁ υἱὸς καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον. διὰ τοῦτο καὶ πιστεύει τὴν ἑαυτοῦ σωτηρίαν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ καὶ πνεύματι ἁγίῳ οὐκ εἰς πλῆθος δυνάμεων καὶ θεοτήτων κατακερματίζων τὴν πίστιν, ἀλλ' εἰς μίαν (115,25) δύνάμιν, μίαν ἀγαθότητα, μίαν ζωοποιὸν ἐξουσίαν, μίαν θεότητα, μίαν ζωὴν πιστεύων. οὕτως ἀναπέμψει τὴν εὐχαριστίαν ὑπὲρ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ζωῆς, ἐκ πατρὸς ἀρχόμενος καὶ τὸν υἱὸν τῷ πατρὶ συμπεριλαμβάνων καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα τοῦ μονογενοῦς οὐ χωρίζων, ὡς πληροῦσθαι τῷ ἐπὶ πάντων θεῷ (115,30) σὺν τῷ μονογενεῖ υἱῷ καὶ τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν καὶ προσκύνῃσιν εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, ἀμήν.

8.1.2 Translation

(113,24) There is something else we need to learn from them: when they think they're worshipping the Father, do they completely expel from their mind any remembrance of the Only-Begotten and the Spirit? And yet, it is unnatural for the one who conceives of "Father" not to conceive also of the Son and for one who has grasped "Son" in his mind not also to receive the Spirit together with

the Son. Now if he completely denies and rejects the confession,³⁵⁹ he is one of the Jews or the Sadducees, both denying the Son and not admitting the (114) Holy Spirit. But if he at all professes to be an ambassador of Christian concerns, it is certain that, when he conceives of “Father”, he has also conceived of him whose Father he is, and when he has taken up the notion of “Son”, he has first been enlightened through the Spirit. For “no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in the Holy Spirit.” (1 Cor 12:3) So when the true worshiper removes the one who rules, who exercises lordship, and who has authority and who activates all the good things in the entire creation from concepts marked by the lowliness of this body and earthly realities, he will honor him not in a way worthy of that one, but to the extent that he himself can.

It is just like that widow who presented two small obols to the temple treasury. (cf. Mk 12:42) She was shown to be a model³⁶⁰ of liberality, not because her resources were at all worthy of wonder, but because her capacity did not allow any more. So one must conclude that the real situation is that everything calculated by humans to honor and glorify is inferior to the majesty of the Spirit, adding nothing whatsoever to his glory. It remains the same whether we honor it or not. But the only gift human nature offers is its freedom of choice*, rendering the homage that it intends to give only by willing it. It has no capacity beyond its will and its intentional impulse and movement. Even if it chose to express its awe, even if it extols the magnificence of the divine power with particular praises, it did not praise the nature. Indeed, how will it praise what it does not know? Rather, it glorified one of the ideas considered in connection with it. It says, “Generation after generation will praise your works and the power of your wonders and the majesty of the glory of your holiness and your marvels. the memory of your bountiful kindness and your greatness in these things they will declare.” (Ps LXX 144:4–7) Do you see that awe is rendered by the prophet through the external ideas considered in connection with the divine nature? But that divine and blessed power itself, just as it is, remains unattainable and imperceptible to thoughts. (115) The curiosity of the mind, the power of reason, the movement of the heart, and the impulse of reflection: all these that divine and blessed power rejects as inferior to itself to a much greater degree than our bodies fall short of touching the stars.

So then, the one who knows these things and understands the worthlessness, weakness, and poverty of his own nature will condemn the foolishness of those who think that from such a small and poor capacity they have something

359 ARG: That is, the confession of faith in Father, Son, and Spirit spoken at baptism.

360 ARG: Reading παράδειγμα, as Mueller conjectured (GNO III.1. 114,12).

loftier than the Spirit's dignity and yet from this resource are sparing with any words or postures that would give him honor—whether some are in the habit of calling such things “adoration” or “worship” makes no difference to me. Looking up to the loftiness of the glory, the true apprehension of which is unattainable for humans, he will condemn himself—just as the patriarch, who was deemed worthy of the divine appearance, did when he named himself “dust and ashes”. (Gen 18:27) Being disposed in this way, he will dedicate himself entirely to doing service to the higher nature, not doing one thing that leads to glorification while abstaining from another. Rather, he will dedicate to the God above all things everything in his own capacity that would seem to be greater and transcendent, continually offering up all the honor, glory, and worship in his capacity to the one who holds the power of salvation. Now, the Father saves, as does the Son and the Holy Spirit. For this reason also, he entrusts his own salvation to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He does not chop up the faith into a multitude of powers and deities, but believes in one power, one goodness, one life-giving power, one deity, one life. In this way, he will offer up thanksgiving for his own life, starting with the Father, grasping the Son along with the Father, and not separating the Spirit from the Only-Begotten. Thus he will render to the God above all with the Only-Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit honor, glory, and worship unto endless ages. Amen.

8.1.3 Paraphrase

In adoring the Father, Christians also adore the Son *and* the Spirit. Human beings who worship have only their freedom of choice to offer as praise of and gift to the Triune Godhead, because no human honour is commensurate to the unknowable greatness of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, and it adds nothing to their incomprehensible glory. The folly of those who refuse to give homage to the Spirit is contrasted with the true worshippers who, in gratitude for their own life, entrust their salvation to the indivisible Trinity, thus giving the latter all possible honour.

8.1.4 Sub-questions

What accusation does Gregory make against his opponents at the beginning of his conclusion?

Gregory appears to begin a new argument with “Ἐπειτα κάκεινο παρ’ αὐτῶν ἔστι μαθεῖν (Maced GNO III.I. 113,24). In fact, however, he speaks from the perspective of his opponents’ ideas, and under the guise of a new point of view, he deduces his conclusion, which begins with the observation of the unnatural nature of their adoration and culminates in his reflection on the true adoration of the Triune Godhead.

They who deny the Son and keep the Spirit outside the worship of God, go against nature, and therefore fully disavow the familiar profession of faith. Doing this makes Jews or Sadducees of them. In making this point, Gregory refers to *Maced* GNO III.I. 110,21–23, where he described the separation of the Spirit, and therefore of the Son, from the worship of God as the worship of the Jews.³⁶¹ Here, in *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,30–31, Gregory, on good grounds, also adds the Sadducees. In the only other place where Gregory mentions the Sadducees, when discussing Mt 22:30 (the woman who successively married seven brothers), *Op hom* (Migne *Patrologia Graeca* XLIV, c. 188 B–D), he introduces the Sadducees as deniers of the resurrection.³⁶² He quotes Jesus, whose reaction teaches not only the Sadducees, but also all people of future ages. This text refers to the *reditus* of human beings to the paradisiacal situation of the beginning:

When the Sadducees once argued against the doctrine of the resurrection, and brought forward, to establish their own opinion, that woman of many marriages, who had been wife to seven brethren, and thereupon inquired whose wife she will be after the resurrection, our Lord answered their argument so as not only to instruct the Sadducees, but also to reveal to all that come after them the mystery of the resurrection-life: “for in the resurrection,” He says, “they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more, for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” (Lk 20:35–36) Now the grace of * the resurrection promises us nothing else than the restoration of the fallen to their ancient state; for the grace we look for is

361 In a number of passages in *Eun* (ἰουδαῖζεν, *Eun* I GNO I. 102,3; *Eun* I GNO I. 103,3–105,18; *Eun* III GNO II. 247,4–5; *Eun* III GNO II. 275,24), *Ref Eun* GNO II. 332,12 and 358,5 and *Simpl* GNO III.I. 62,8–9, it is the denial of the divinity of the Son (and thus of the Spirit) that is at issue. The denial of the Spirit leads inescapably to the denial of the Son, given 1 Cor 12:3 (“For nobody is able to say: Jesus is Lord, except in the Holy Spirit.”). It is precisely here that Gregory differs fundamentally from his Jewish source of inspiration, Philo, see ALBERT-KEES GELJON, *Moses as Example: The Philonic Background of Gregory of Nyssa’s De Vita Moysis*, Leiden 2000, 184–188, the chapter *Gregory and Philo’s Judaism*. Philo, and in his footsteps, Eunomius, regard the Logos as being of lower rank than God.

362 Gregory of Nazianzus also immediately associates the Sadducees with the denial of the Holy Spirit, and of the angels and of the resurrection, and this in his *Oratio On the Holy Spirit* 31. 5,2–4, in: PAUL GALLAY & MAURICE JOURJON, *Grégoire de Nazianze, Discours 27–31 (Discours théologiques). Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes* (SC 250), Paris 1978, 282: Τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον Σαδδουκαῖοι μὲν οὐδὲ εἶναι τὸ παράπαν ἐνόμισαν· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀγγέλους, οὐδὲ ἀνάστασιν.

a certain return to the first life, bringing back again to Paradise him who was cast out from it.³⁶³

Gregory therefore has good reason to add to Sadducees here in *Maced*, precisely at the point at the end of his treatise where he discusses the *reditus* of human beings to God, through their adoration of the Triune Godhead. In *Op hom*, which was just mentioned, the resurrection is called a kind of ἐπάνοδος, *reditus* (Migne *Patrologia Graeca* XLIV c. 188 C). The Sadducees are the people who, together with the resurrection, also deny the *reditus* of human beings.³⁶⁴

What do the Christian creed and the corresponding worship of God presuppose? In the conclusion, Gregory once again lashes out at his opponents. They are personified by those who fully reject the familiar creed and, like the Jews or the Sadducees, in unnatural fashion deny the Son and keep the Spirit outside the adoration of God. In his concluding accusation to the effect that his opponents reject the creed (ἀθετεῖ τὴν ὁμολογίαν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,30), Gregory chooses a word, ἀθετεῖ, from the first Canon of the Council of Constantinople of 381 (Ὁρισαν οἱ ἐν Κωνσταντινουπόλει συνελθόντες ἄγιοι Πατέρες, μὴ ἀθετεῖσθαι τὴν πίστιν τῶν Πατέρων τῶν τριακοσίων δέκα ὀκτώ), and thus completes a whole series of statements against the deniers of the Spirit and, therefore, of the Son; statements in which the denial of the Spirit and/or of the Son is designated with ἀθετεῖν.³⁶⁵

Gregory contrasts these apostates with human beings who, in faithfulness to their promise to honour the Christian principles of doctrine, include the Son

363 *Op hom* (Migne *Patrologia Graeca* XLIV k. 188 B–C): Ἀντιλεγόντων ποτὲ τῶν Σαδδουκαίων τῷ κατὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν λόγῳ, καὶ τὴν πολύγαμον ἐκείνην γυναῖκα, τὴν τοῖς ἐπτά γενομένην ἀδελφοῖς, εἰς σύστασιν τοῦ καθ’ αὐτοὺς δόγματος προφερόντων, εἶτα τίνος μετὰ τὴν ἀνάστασιν ἔσται πυνθανομένων, ἀποκρίνεται πρὸς τὸν λόγον ὁ Κύριος, οὐ μόνον τοὺς Σαδδουκαίους παιδεύων, ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς μετὰ ταῦτα τῆς ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει ζωῆς φανερῶν τὸ μυστήριον. Ἐν γὰρ τῇ ἀναστάσει, φησὶν, οὔτε γαμοῦσιν, οὔτε γαμίσκονται· οὔτε γὰρ ἀποθανεῖν ἔτι δύνανται· ἰσάγγελοι γὰρ εἰσι, καὶ υἱοὶ Θεοῦ εἰσι, τῆς ἀναστάσεως υἱοὶ ὄντες. Ἡ δὲ τῆς ἀναστάσεως χάρις οὐδὲν ἕτερον ἡμῖν ἐπαγγέλλεται, ἢ τὴν εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον τῶν πεπτωκότων ἀποκατάστασιν. Ἐπάνοδος γὰρ τίς ἐστὶν ἐπὶ τὴν πρῶτην ζωὴν ἢ προσδοκωμένη χάρις, τὸν ἀποβληθέντα τοῦ παραδείσου πάλιν εἰς αὐτὸν ἐπανάγουσα (transl. by WILLIAM MOORE & HENRI AUSTIN WILSON, adapted).

364 JEAN DANIELÉLOU, *Chrismation prébaptismale*, 193, asks, unnecessarily, whether the striking addition of the Sadducees to the Jews—he speaks of a strange opposition—refers to the Essenes. But denying the resurrection, as in Mt 22:30, is sufficient grounds for Gregory to add the Sadducees just here.

365 *Maced* GNO III.I. 93,12–14; 94,1; 101,4–5; 101,27–28; 107,2–3; 111,21–24. In his *Epist can* GNO III.V. 5,3–6, Gregory speaks of apostasy (ἐπὶ ἀθετήσει τῆς πίστεως) and explains this as follows: πρὸς τὸ μὴ πιστεῦειν εἶναι θεὸν τὸν παρὰ τῶν Χριστιανῶν προσκυνούμενον.

in their concept of the Father, and are open to illumination by the Spirit; it is only in the Spirit that a person can say: Jesus is Lord. This once again points to the essential role of the Spirit in enabling the orthodox profession of faith. Gregory literally quotes Paul in the latter's 1st epistle to the Corinthians (1Cor 12:3). Human beings can only utter the full profession of faith in the full divinity of Father, Son, and Spirit if they have been illumined beforehand by the Spirit. In the only other text in Gregory's works in which he speaks of the prior illumination by the Spirit, *Steph* 1 of 26 December 386, Gregory, in his opposition to the Pneumatomachi, links the acknowledgement of the full divinity of the Spirit with prior illumination by the Spirit. The Spirit makes it possible for human beings, in the light of Christ, to see the light of the Father, which Gregory also describes in a different variant as the glory of the Father and the Son, which human beings—in this case Stephen—can behold, thanks to the glory of the Spirit, or, it might be said, thanks to the glory that the Spirit *is*.³⁶⁶ In his sermon *Steph* 1, Gregory calls on the Pneumatomach whom he addresses as such, to listen and not to close his ears like the Jews, in his—the Pneumatomach's—belief that Stephen, as Acts 7 says, beheld the Father and the Son, but that the Spirit was absent from this vision.

What does Scripture say (Acts 7:55)? Full of the Holy Spirit, Stephen beheld the glory of God and the only-begotten Son of God. It is not possible, the prophet says (sc. David) (Ps LXX 35:10), to see the light unless we are able to perceive in the light. For *in your light*, the prophet says, *we will see light*. (It never happens that the perception of light takes place without light. For how would it be possible to look at the sun while staying outside its rays?) In the light of the Father, therefore, which is the Holy Spirit who proceeds from it, can the only-begotten light be seen. It is precisely for this reason that Stephen was granted the enraptured vision of the glory of the Father and the Son, illumined beforehand as he was by the glory of the Spirit. But how can we say that the statement of the Gospel that no one has ever seen God (Jn 1:18) is truthful? How can we say that the Apostle (sc. Paul, 1Tim 6:16) did not teach the opposite of what

366 JOHAN LEEMANS gives a description of this sermon in his paper *Reading Acts 6–7 in the Early Church: Gregory of Nyssa's First and Second Homilies on Stephen the Protomartyr*, in: J. BAUN ET AL. (ed.), *Studia Patristica* 47 (2010) 9–19 (*Cappadocian Writers*), and writes on p. 18: “Gregory stresses that Stephen was only able to see this vision of the Father and the Son because he was filled by the Spirit, as is written in 7:55. This was necessary, because only like is able to know like, according to one of Gregory's basic, epistemological presuppositions. By no means the martyr Stephen could have transcended the boundaries of the laws of nature and received his vision without divine grace.”

was handed down to us when he exclaims that *No human being has ever seen the divine light, nor is able to see it?* For if the glory of the Father and of the Son manifests itself in a manner that can be grasped by human nature and by human capabilities, then this means at least that he is a liar who revealed that the vision of God transcends the capabilities of human beings. But it is impossible that Stephen should tell lies; it must be that what was recounted is in accordance with the truth. Now, the malicious deceitfulness of those who fight against the Spirit is openly manifested, because Scripture testifies that that which is equal is seen by virtue of that which corresponds to it. For Stephen did not remain in his human nature and his human capabilities and then saw the divine, no, he was united with the grace of the Holy Spirit and was elevated by him to the level at which he could know God. Now, if it is impossible to see Jesus as the Lord without the Spirit, as the Apostle says (1 Cor 12:3), or to fathom the glory of the Father, it has surely been demonstrated clearly that it is where the Spirit is that the Son is seen and the glory of the Father is perceived.³⁶⁷

It is the Spirit who plays the key role here in the ascent of human beings to God. Thanks to the grace of the Spirit, into whose light human beings enter, they can see Christ as the light through which the light of the Father can be seen to radiate. A fine coherence of *oikonomia* and *theologia*, in which coherence the Spirit plays a key role.³⁶⁸ Given the necessity of the Spirit for the faith,

367 Steph 1 GNO X.I. 90,5–91,9: ἀλλὰ τί λέγει; Στέφανος δὲ Πλήρης ὢν πνεύματος ἁγίου εἶδε τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὸν μονογενῆ τοῦ θεοῦ [υἱόν]. οὐ γὰρ ἔστι, καθὼς φησιν ὁ προφήτης, τὸ φῶς ὁφθῆναι μὴ ἐν φωτὶ καθορώμενον. Ἐν γὰρ τῷ φωτὶ σου, φησὶν, ὁψόμεθα φῶς. (οὐκ ἐνδέχεται μὴ ἐν φωτὶ γενέσθαι τὴν τοῦ φωτὸς θεωρίαν· πῶς γὰρ ἔστιν ἀπιδεῖν εἰς τὸν ἥλιον ἔξω τῶν ἀκτίνων γενόμενον;) ἐπεὶ οὖν ἐν τῷ φωτὶ τοῦ πατρὸς, τοῦτέστι τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ τῷ ἐκείθεν ἐκπορευομένῳ, τὸ μονογενὲς καθοράται φῶς, διὰ τοῦτο προκαταυγασθεὶς τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν περινοίᾳ τῆς τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ υἱοῦ δόξης ἐγένετο. ἐπεὶ, πῶς τὴν εὐαγγελικὴν ἀπόφασιν ἀληθεύειν φήσομεν, ὅτι Θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἑώρακε πώποτε; πῶς δὲ τὸν ἀπόστολον μὴ ἐναντία τοῖς ἱστορηθεῖσι βοᾶν, ὅταν λέγῃ· Οὔτε τις εἶδεν ἀνθρώπων οὔτε ἰδεῖν δύναται; εἰ γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνη φύσει τε καὶ δυνάμει ἢ τοῦ πατρὸς τε καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ δόξα χωρητὴ κατέστη, ψευδὴς πάντως ὁ ἀχώρητον ἀνθρώποις ἀποφηνάμενος εἶναι τὸ θέαμα. ἀλλὰ μὴν οὔτε ἐκείνον ψεύδεσθαι καὶ τὴν ἱστορίαν ἀληθεύειν ἐπάναγκες. ἄρα φανερώς ἢ κακουργία τῶν πνευματομαχοῦντων πεφώραται, ὅτι τῷ ὁμοίῳ καθορᾶσθαι τὰ ὅμοια παρὰ τῆς γραφῆς μεμαρτύρηται. ὁ γὰρ Στέφανος οὐκ ἐν τῇ ἀνθρωπίνῃ φύσει τε καὶ δυνάμει μένων τὸ θεῖον βλέπει, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος χάριν ἀνακραθεὶς δι' ἐκείνου ὑψώθη πρὸς τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ κατανόησιν. οὐκοῦν εἰ χωρὶς πνεύματος οὔτε κύριον Ἰησοῦν ἔστιν ἰδεῖν, καθὼς φησιν ὁ ἀπόστολος, οὔτε τὴν πατρικὴν δόξαν κατανόησαι, δέδεικται σαφῶς, ὅτι ὅπου τὸ πνεῦμα ἔστιν ἐκεῖ καὶ ὁ υἱὸς καθοράται καὶ ἡ πατρικὴ δόξα καταλαμβάνεται.

368 JOCHEN REXER, *Die Festtheologie*, 275, points to this coherence. On pp. 106–112 he gives a description of this sermon. DAVID BENTLEY HART, *The Mirror of the Infinite*, 124: “the Trinitarian relations ‘declare’ or ‘express’ themselves, as at once the threefold ‘com-

the Spirit must necessarily himself be God, like the Father and the Son. It is worth in respect of this text to look more closely at Gregory's equation between divine glory and the Spirit: thanks to the power of the Spirit, human beings, in the light that is the Spirit, are able to see the glory of the Father and the Son, the glory of which the Spirit is the personification. Shortly before, in *Steph I GNO X.I.* 89,6–8, Gregory spoke of the attacks by the Pneumatomachi (τὰς τῶν πνευματομαχούντων λαβὰς), who in their fury resisted the glory of the Spirit (οἱ λυσσῶντες κατὰ τῆς δόξης τοῦ πνεύματος). It is possible to escape these attacks if we allow ourselves to be trained in orthodoxy by the great Stephen (ἡμᾶς διὰ τοῦ μεγάλου Στεφάνου παιδοτριβηθῆναι πρὸς τὴν εὐσέβειαν, *Steph I GNO X.I.* 89,5–6). In the continuation, Gregory speaks of people who refuse to give the Son the glory he is due, the Christomachi (χριστομαχούντων, *Steph I GNO X.I.* 91,10–11). One teacher alone (εἷς ὁ διδάσκαλος, *Steph I GNO X.I.* 92,7), the Spirit of truth (ὁ δὲ διδάσκαλος τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας ἐστί, *Steph I GNO X.I.* 92,8), taught Paul and David the full glory and divinity of the Son (τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τοῦ πνεύματος, *Steph I GNO X.I.* 91,15). Denying the glory of the Spirit leads to denying the glory of the Son. Persons who commit this sin are called lawless opponents (τῶν ἀντιδίκων, *Steph I GNO X.I.* 94,12). Stephen's fight is also a fight against heresy, and Gregory's congregants are invited to participate in it. The past of Scripture thus liturgically becomes the present.³⁶⁹

Belief in the full divinity of the Spirit, which the Pneumatomachi do not have, is a condition for the correct interpretation of Scripture and for worshipping God in truth. Gregory here introduces a distinction: following Jn 4:23 (οἱ ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνῶνται προσκυνήσουσιν τῷ πατρὶ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ) he speaks of the true adorer, whom he contrasts with the false adorer. Remarkably, Gregory here characterises true adorers on the basis of their worship of the Spirit, while John's true adorers worship the Father, in Spirit and in truth; incidentally, this is also the only *locus* where Gregory uses the word προσκυνητής. This true adorer turns away from "that physical, earthly lowness of thought". Precisely in his explanation of the textual variant in Luke's gospel 11:2b, where Gregory reads "Let your Holy Spirit come to us and purify us", Ἐλθέτω τὸ πνεῦμα σου τὸ ἅγιον ἐφ' ἡμᾶς καὶ καθαρисάτω ἡμᾶς instead of "Your kingdom come" as it appears in Mt 6:10a, ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου (*Or dom III SC* 412,17–414,2; *GNO VII.II.* 39,18–19), he accuses his opponents, whom he calls "people with an impertinent mouth against the Spirit" (οἱ θρασυστομοῦντες κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, *SC* 414,3; *Or dom GNO VII.II.* 39,20), of changing the dignity of the kingship, which is the

munity' of glory and also the perfect unity of divine being's structure of infinite self-manifestation."

369 Cf. JOHAN LEEMANS, Reading Acts 6–7, 18.

Holy Spirit, into the lowliness of subordination.³⁷⁰ His explanation in *Or dom* shows that lowness of thoughts causes human beings to make the Holy Spirit part of creation.

It is for this reason that, very appropriately, a series of divine qualifications follows here in *Maced* as substantivised names of the Spirit (τὸ ἄρχον καὶ τὸ κυριεύον καὶ τὸ ἐξουσιάζον καὶ τὸ πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἐνεργούν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει, *Maced* GNO III.I. 114,7–9), names that point on the one hand to the ruling of the Spirit as a description of the fact that the Spirit is κύριον, and on the other identify the Spirit as the giver of life, of all good things in creation. Continuing in the vein of the hymn of praise to the Spirit in *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,8–10, which develops the guidance of the Spirit and his life-giving work chiasmatically, the two first attributes in the Creed of the Council of Constantinople of 381 are once again visible here: τὸ κύριον, τὸ ζωοποιόν. Because of these divine qualifications of the Spirit, Gregory does not see any clash between the text of Jn 4:23 and his own statement about true worship; this is especially true here, in his opposition against the Pneumatomachi: it is only in adoring the Spirit that Christians can adore the Father through the Son, and thus partake in the *reditus* to God.

What similarity is there between the true adorer and the poor widow from the lesson of the widow's offering?

Following on from the statement Gregory just made about the true adorer, he points to the poor widow in the lesson of the widow's offering from Mk 12:41–44/Lk 21:3–4. In this story, a poor widow brings all her possessions to the treasury when she throws two mites worth a cent into it, unlike people who give of their abundance. In her generosity, which is testimony to her desire to give all honour that she is capable of giving, she is held up as an example to the true adorer. Like this widow, true adorers are incapable of giving the Spirit fitting honour, because they are incapable of adding anything to the unchangeable glory of the Spirit. What the adorers can do, however, is give all honour that they are capable of. Offering up our poverty, according to the example of the poor widow, of all that we are capable of, the awareness that we are unworthy and incapable of giving fitting honour to the Spirit, these are signs of our reverent generosity, our φιλοτιμία. In the light of the continuation, where the divine and blessed δύναμις of God is described as inaccessible and invisible, towering over the powers of the human intellect, the miserable limitations of our human capacity stand out in sharp contrast. In this context, the poor widow functions

370 *Or dom* III (SC 414,3–5; GNO VII.II. 39,19–22): Τί ἐροῦσιν πρὸς ταῦτα οἱ θρασυστομούντες κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος; Τίτι διανοίᾳ τὴν τῆς βασιλείας ἀξίαν εἰς ταπεινότητα δουλείας μετασκευάζουσιν;

as a metaphor for human beings in their limitations. In *Benef*, the lesson of the widow's offering functions in a different, more familiar context: Gregory contrasts the widow's mite, all her possessions, with the pittance that the rich give:

Do you see that even the widow's mite surpassed the offerings of the rich? For she divested herself of all her possessions, but the rich parted only with little.³⁷¹

What conclusion does Gregory draw about rendering honour to the Holy Spirit?

The Spirit (and not just the Father and the Son) deserves to receive honour from human beings. The familiar profession of faith requires it, given the divine nature of the Spirit, the fact that he is Lord and the giver of gifts. Given his unchangeability and his divinity, it is impossible to add anything to his glory. This is why human beings, although they are required to give honour to the Spirit (beside the Father and the Son), are incapable of giving fitting honour to the Spirit. But they are able to give him the only possible gift that miserable, poor human beings are capable of giving.

What is the only possible gift that human beings can give God to praise and thank him?

All that human nature has to offer to give thanks is its free will, its freedom to make choices independently:

But the only gift human nature offers is its freedom of choice, rendering the homage that it intends to give only by willing it. It has no capacity beyond its will and its intentional impulse and movement.

Maced GNO III.I. 114,18–21

What does Gregory mean when he speaks of human beings' only praise and thanks being their freedom of choice?

We have come here to the core of the human response to the *exitus* of God; God who desires to bring human beings along in the *reditus* in the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father. Human beings who venture onto that journey have only their *προαίρεσις*, their free will, their freedom of choice, to praise and thank God in their *reditus*.³⁷² It is precisely their freedom of choice, their independence,

³⁷¹ *Benef* GNO IX. 98,20–22: ὁρᾷς ὡς καὶ ὁ τῆς χήρας κοδραντῆς ὑπερέβαλε τῶν πλουσίων τὰ ἀναθήματα; ἡ μὲν γὰρ ὁ εἶχεν ὅλον ἐκένωσε, τῶν δὲ ὀλίγον ἐξέπεσεν.

³⁷² MARTIN STRECK, *Das Schönste Gut. Der Menschliche Wille bei Nemesius von Emesa und Gregor von Nyssa*, Göttingen 2005, 127–182, and GIAMPIETRO DAL TOSO, *La Nozione di*

that makes human beings the image and likeness of God. This is the *proprium* of human beings!³⁷³

In *Virg*, Gregory speaks about the independence of the freedom of choice:

Man was the image and likeness, as it has been said, of the sovereign power over all beings, and, for this reason, even in the exercise of choice, man is like the One who has power over all things, being enslaved by necessity to none of the things outside of himself, and he acts according to his own judgment of what seems best to him.³⁷⁴

Freedom of choice is the highest honour of human beings, given to them by God, as Gregory affirms in his *Or cat*:

Out of his high regard for man, the Sovereign of the universe left something under our own control and of which each of us is the sole master. I mean the freedom of choice, a faculty which is free from bondage and independent, and is grounded in the freedom of the mind.³⁷⁵

This freedom of choice is a gift from God: τὸν δὲ ἄνθρωπον τῇ αὐτεξουσίῳ χάριτι κατεκόσμησεν, *Or dom* V SC 514,14–15; GNO VII.II. 71,4–5; λέγω δὴ τῆς κατὰ τὸ ἀδέσποτον καὶ αὐτεξούσιον χάριτος, *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 19,20–21.³⁷⁶ If human life is

Proairesis in Gregorio di Nissa. Analisi Semiotico-linguistica e Prospettive Antropologiche, Frankfurt am Main 1998, *passim*, were of great help in my interpretation of προαίρεσις. See also Johan Leemans's review of the latter in *Vigiliae Christianae* 56 (2002) 297–299.

373 GIAMPIETRO DAL TOSO, *La Nozione di ΠΡΟΑΙΡΕΣΙΣ in Gregorio di Nissa*, in: HUBERTUS R. DROBNER & ALBERT VICIANO (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 1998* (VCS 52), Leiden 2000, 569–580, p. 580: “la libertà intesa come autogoverno, il *proprium* dell' uomo nel suo essere libero.”

374 *Virg* GNO VIII.I. 298,10–16: εἰκὼν ἦν καὶ ὁμοίωμα, καθὼς εἴρηται, τῆς πάντων τῶν ὄντων βασιλευσύνης δυναμέως καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτεξουσίῳ τῆς προαιρέσεως πρὸς τὸν ἐξουσιάζοντα πάντων εἶχε τὴν ὁμοιότητα, οὐδεμιᾶ τινι τῶν ἔξωθεν ἀνάγκῃ δεδουλωμένος, ἀλλὰ τῇ γυνώμῃ τῇ ἰδίᾳ πρὸς τὸ δοκοῦν δικαίου καὶ τὸ ἀρέσκον αὐτῷ κατ' ἐξουσίαν αἰρούμενος (transl. by VIRGINIA WOODS CALLAHAN).

375 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 75,13–17: ὁ γὰρ τοῦ παντὸς τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔχων δι' ὑπερβολὴν τῆς εἰς τὸν ἄνθρωπον τιμῆς ἀφήκε τι καὶ ὑπὸ τὴν ἡμετέραν ἐξουσίαν εἶναι, οὐ μόνος ἑκαστός ἐστι κύριος· τοῦτο δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ προαίρεσις, ἀδούλωτόν τι χρήμα καὶ αὐτεξούσιον ἐν τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ τῆς διανοίας κείμενον (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON, adapted).

376 ALAN S. DUNSTONE, *The Meaning of Grace*, 235–244, shows that grace, χάρις, is an umbrella term in Gregory's work. Even human freedom is one of the gifts of God's grace! Following Dunstone, MARTIN STRECK, *Das Schönste Gut*, 156: observes: “Der Verwendung

like a work of art, then freedom of choice is the maker of this work of art, and the virtues are the colours that give expression to the image, Gregory observes in his *Perf.*³⁷⁷ This means that human freedom of choice is that characteristic of human beings that makes them most alike the Triune Godhead, who is characterised by the unity of will of the three divine persons. As a consequence of sin, this freedom of choice becomes an exceptional evil for human beings:

Though our power of free will is a good, when it is active for evil it becomes the worst of evils.³⁷⁸

In other words: the freedom of choice can be used for good or for ill.³⁷⁹ Through the mediation of Christ, the true physician (ὁ ἀληθινὸς ἰατρός, *Or dom* IV SC 436,13; GNO VII.II. 46,8), human beings are cured of their illness; Christ unites us once more with the will of God:

And those who had succumbed to sickness because they had separated themselves from the divine will he (sc. Christ) frees again from illness by

dieses Wortes (sc. χάρις) nachzugehen, trägt daher für die Frage nach dem Synergismus bei Gregor wenig bei."

377 *Perf* GNO VIII.I. 196, 2–5: ἐπειδὴ τῆς ἰδίας ἑκάστος ζωῆς ἐστὶ ζωγράφος, τεχνίτης δὲ τῆς δημιουργίας ταύτης ἐστὶν ἡ προαίρεσις, χρώματα δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἀπεργασίαν τῆς εἰκόνος αἱ ἀρεταί. VERA E. HARRISON, *Grace and Human Freedom according to St. Gregory of Nyssa*, Lewiston 1992, 145, has pointed to this important passage. CLAUDIO MORESCHINI, Goodness, Evil and the Free Will of Man in Gregory of Nyssa, in: PIETER D'HOINE & GERD VAN RIEL (ed.), *Fate, Providence and Moral Responsibility in Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Thought. Studies in Honour of Carlos Steel*, Leuven 2014, 343–356, p. 348, adds that Gregory's repeated emphasis on human freedom of choice makes him a faithful follower of Origen in this regard.

378 *Eccl* VIII GNO V. 428,1–2: καλὸν γάρ τι οὖσα ἡ αὐτεξούσιος δύναμις ἡμῶν, ὅταν πρὸς τὸ κακὸν ἐνεργῇ, κακῶν ἔσχατον γίνεται (transl. bij STUART GEORGE HALL).

379 CLAUDIO MORESCHINI, Goodness, 352–356, has demonstrated how human beings with their free will, their freedom of choice, choose between good and evil, which is absence of good: "Since God is a creator, man can create as well, precisely because he is the image of Him. But God, in his perfection and his immutability, creates only goodness, and what he creates is endowed with subsistence; conversely, man, insofar as he is merely an image, and thus inferior to his model, can create not only subsistent realms (good), but also non-subsistent ones (evil), whenever he abandons the divinely accorded good wherein he lives, and whereby he lives. Doing evil is something unavoidable for man, because of his ontological state of creature; but it is also a consequence of his free will, since, while God does not 'want' or 'choose', man must choose between desiring goodness or desiring wickedness. Man is in fact located in the middle (μεθόριος) between material and intelligible realms, between good and evil: in this situation, he must direct himself towards being or towards non-being."

conjoining them to the will of God. For the words of the Prayer are a remedy for the sin implanted in the soul.³⁸⁰

Gregory distinguishes freedom, ἐλευθερία, and freedom of choice, προαίρεσις. Freedom of choice used for the good, the decision to lead a virtuous life, through the mediation of Christ, sets human beings on course towards God, towards God's own freedom, his ἐλευθερία. The source of the virtuous life that is characterised by freedom (ἀρετὴ δὲ ἀδέσποτον, *An et res* III.III. 76,12–13), is divine nature itself:

since the divine nature is the source of all virtue, those who are free from vice will exist in it, in order, as the apostle says: 'that God may be all in all'.³⁸¹

In the history of theology, Gregory has been accused of (semi-) Pelagianism and of synergism, especially by Protestant critics. Ekkehard Mühlenberg has convincingly pointed out the differences between Gregory's and Augustine's doctrines of the will.³⁸² It is very important to make this distinction, because if Augustine's *voluntas* and Gregory's προαίρεσις are conflated, this would give rise to the wrong conclusions. Augustine does not know of any mediating factor between good will, *bona voluntas*, *amor Dei*, and evil will, *mala voluntas*, *amor sui*. The evil will determines the fate of human beings. It becomes their nature. Only a supernatural transformation by virtue of God's grace can reinstate the *bona voluntas*. By contrast with Augustine, Gregory makes no distinction between nature and supernature.³⁸³ Nature is a gift of grace that induces human beings to long for the true life of God, a natural desire. In addition to this desire that human beings have, there is their freedom of choice, their capacity

380 *Or dom* IV (SC 436,14–18; GNO VII.II. 46,10–14): καὶ τοὺς διὰ τοῦτο τῇ ἀρρωστίᾳ συνεχέχθοντας ὅτι τοῦ θείου θελήματος ἐχωρίσθησαν πάλιν ἐλευθεροὶ τοῦ νοσήματος τῇ πρὸς τὸ βούλημα τοῦ θεοῦ συναφείᾳ. Τὰ γὰρ τῆς προσευχῆς ῥήματα θεραπεία ἐστὶ τῆς ἐγγενομένης τῇ ψυχῇ ἀμαρτίας (GNO: ἀρρωστίας) (transl. by MARK DELCOGLIANO).

381 *An et res* GNO III.III. 76,13–15: ἀλλὰ μὴν ἡ θεία φύσις ἡ πηγὴ πάσης ἐστὶν ἀρετῆς· ἐν ταύτῃ ἄρα οἱ τῆς κακίας ἀπηλλαγμένοι γενήσονται, ἵνα, καθὼς φησιν ὁ ἀπόστολος, Ὁ θεὸς ᾗ τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν (transl. by VIRGINA WOODS CALLAHAN).

382 EKKEHARD MÜHLENBERG, Synergism in Gregory of Nyssa, in: *Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der Älteren Kirche* 68 (1977) 93–122 (in a sharp response to ADOLF M. RITTER, *Die Gnadenlehre Gregors von Nyssa nach seiner Schrift "Über das Leben des Mose"*, in: HEINRICH DÖRRIE & MARGARETE ALTENBURGER & UTA SCHRAM [ed.], *Gregor von Nyssa und die Philosophie*, Leiden 1976, 195–239).

383 Following Mühlenberg, VERNA E. HARRISON, *Grace*, 257, has demonstrated this convincingly.

to orient their impulses, their desires, towards the good or towards what is only apparently good. Through the Fall, the human body has become mortal, and their natural desire for God as someone kindred, their ἔρως, is transformed into πάθος, the impulse towards what is only apparently good. Their προαίρεσις has become confused, has lost its orientation towards the innate end, and gives free rein to their impulses to seek what is only apparently good instead of what is truly good, the natural destiny. This means that human beings lose the freedom that is fitting to God, but not their προαίρεσις. In baptism, the fruit of Christ's incarnation, passion, death and resurrection, freedom of choice through the assistance of the Holy Spirit regains its ability to see what is truly good, and to orient human desire, purified and transformed from πάθος into ἔρως, towards what is truly good, to God, their kindred end, their τέλος.³⁸⁴ In this way, the likeness of God is restored to human beings; this is through God's grace, but it is also the natural condition of human beings as it was intended at the creation, Gen 1:26. Human beings' likeness to God is not a supernatural thing, distinct from their natural condition, but it is something that defines human nature. Thanks to the liberation of free will, their freedom to choose to block their desire for what is only apparently good, human beings can, aided by the Holy Spirit, let their human and insatiable desire, their ἔρως be directed to him with whom they are related by nature: the infinite God as their ultimate end. This constitutes human beatitude and human perfection. It is God, Gregory says in *Or dom*, from whom the human freedom to choose the good comes:

But why do we pray that the choice for good come to us from God?³⁸⁵

In the fortieth and last chapter of *Or cat*, we read of the reborn, that is the baptised, who become children of God:

384 ALBRECHT DIHLE, Das Problem der Entscheidungsfreiheit in frühchristlicher Zeit. Die Überwindung des gnostischen Heilsdeterminismus mit den Mitteln der griechischen Philosophie, in: ALBRECHT DIHLE, *Ausgewählte kleine Schriften zu Antike und Christentum*, herausgegeben von GEORG SCHÖLLGEN (Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum Ergänzungsband 38), Münster 2013, 98–113, p. 113, following on from Mühlenberg, has rightly pointed out Gregory's specific doctrine which, by contrast with Greek thought in general, ruptures the intellectualism of the Platonic tradition: "Das negativ formulierte Ziel (sc. the unknowability of God) ist im Sinn einer intellektualistischen Auffassung vom Menschen definiert, der Weg zum Ziel hingegen wird aus voluntaristischer Perspektive gesehen, weil angesichts der Unerkennbarkeit des Lebenszieles das Streben ohne die Gewissheit letzter Erkenntnis einen für griechisches Denken kaum faßbaren Eigenwert erhält."

385 *Or dom* IV (SC 440,12–13; GNO VII.11. 47,15–17): Διὰ τί δὲ παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ γενέσθαι τὴν ἀγαθὴν ἡμῖν προαίρεσιν ἐπευχόμεθα; (transl. by MARK DELCOGLIANO).

whereas the gospel says of the regenerate that 'He gave all those who received him the power to become God's children' (Jn 1:12). Now the child born of someone certainly shares his parent's nature. If, then, you have received God and become his child, let your freedom of choice* (προαίρεσις) testify to the God within you; make it clear who your Father is! The marks by which we recognize God are the very ones by which a son of his must show his relation to him: 'he opens his hand and fills everything living with joy' (Ps LXX 144:16); 'he overlooks iniquity' (Mic 7:18); 'he relents of his evil purpose' (Joel 2:13); 'the Lord is kind to all, and is not angry with us every day' (Ps LXX 144:9; 7:12); 'God is straightforward and there is no unrighteousness in him' (Ps LXX 91:16)—and the similar sayings scattered through Scripture for our instruction. If you are like this, you have genuinely become a child of God. But if you persist in displaying the marks of evil, it is useless to prattle to yourself about the birth from above.³⁸⁶

This parallel text³⁸⁷ shows that being a child of God is part of rebirth, on the condition that the baptised person is as good as God. If the characteristics of evil remain, then baptism is without effect, even though the grace of baptism continues to flow. Baptism is a gift, a grace, because it is in baptism that the Holy Spirit helps human beings to free their free will, which can no longer see its innate orientation to God as its kindred end due to bad habits. This restores to the human freedom of choice its ability once more to see the ultimate end that is fitting to human beings, God, as befitting human nature, and the ability to bend the impulses of human beings away from that which is only apparently good and to direct the human desire, their ἔρως, towards what is truly

386 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 104,10–105,6: "Ὅσοι ἔλαβον αὐτόν, φησὶ περὶ τῶν ἀναγεννηθέντων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἐξουσίαν τέκνα θεοῦ γενέσθαι. Τὸ τέκνον γενόμενόν τιнос ὁμογενὲς πάντως ἐστὶ τῷ γεννήσαντι. εἰ οὖν ἔλαβες τὸν θεὸν καὶ τέκνον ἐγένου θεοῦ, δεῖξον διὰ τῆς προαιρέσεως καὶ τὸν ἐν σοὶ ὄντα θεόν, δεῖξον ἐν σεαυτῷ τὸν γεννήσαντα. ἐξ ὧν τὸν θεὸν γνωρίζομεν, δι' ἐκείνων προσήκει δειχθῆναι τοῦ γενομένου υἱοῦ θεοῦ τὴν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν οἰκειότητα. ἐκεῖνος Ἀνοίγει τὴν χεῖρα καὶ ἐμπιπλᾷ πᾶν ζῶον εὐδοκίας, ὑπερβαίνει ἀνομίας, μετανοεῖ ἐπὶ κακίαις· Χρηστὸς κύριος τοῖς σύμπασιν, μὴ ὀργὴν ἐπάγων καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν· Εὐθὺς κύριος ὁ θεὸς καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἀδικία ἐν αὐτῷ, καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα σποράδην παρὰ τῆς γραφῆς διδασκόμεθα. ἐὰν ἐν τούτοις ᾗς, ἀληθῶς ἐγένου τέκνον θεοῦ· εἰ δὲ τοῖς τῆς κακίας ἐπιμένεις γνωρίσμασι, μάτην ἐπιθυλεῖς σεαυτῷ τὴν ἀνωθεν γέννησιν (transl. by CYRIL R. RICHARDSON).

387 MARTIN STRECK, *Das Schönste Gut*, 171, has observed in relation to *Or cat* chapter 40: "dass der Mensch für Gregor immer von dem Guten angezogen wird, ob er sich davon abwendet und entfernt oder nicht. Bildlich gesprochen: Der Mensch ist von der Gnade Gottes umgeben wie von einer starken Strömung. Er hat mit seinem eigenen Tun keinen Einfluss auf diese Strömung. Er kann gegen sie schwimmen oder sich ihr überlassen und mit ihr schwimmen und dadurch die Wirkung der Strömung verstärken."

good. The human impulses are thus purified and transformed.³⁸⁸ In sum, God's grace always precedes human action, God's saving actions outweigh human actions. The superabundance of grace ensures that human openness to further growth towards God and his freedom increases.³⁸⁹ In *An et res*, Gregory compares human souls to vases that contain free space (ἀγγεία τινα προαιρετικά, GNO III.III. 78,8) into which God's goods can flow. The reception of these goods widens the receiving human being, and this widening never ceases. It is a form of *epektasis*.

The rational nature came into being for this purpose, that the wealth of divine goods might not be idle. Receptacles with the faculty of choice were constructed like vases by the wisdom that sustains all things in order that there would be some place capable of receiving these goods, a place that always becomes larger because of what is additionally poured into it.³⁹⁰

388 SARAH COAKLEY, *God, Sexuality, and the Self. An Essay 'on the Trinity'*, Cambridge 2013, *passim*, describes the attraction that the Trinity exerts and the erotic force that is based upon this with which human beings extend their desire to God. The Spirit plays a central role in this interplay, in accordance with Rom 8:26.

389 In his chapter *Alleged Moralism in Nyssen's Theology* HANS BOERSMA, *Embodiment and Virtue in Gregory of Nyssa. An Anagogical Approach*, Oxford 2013, 215–221, follows Mühlenberg and Harrison in refusing to call Gregory a moralistic theologian. Although Boersma accepts (p. 228), not without doubts, that Gregory is the author of the controversial work *Inst*, he does acknowledge (p. 229) that this work contains a certain form of synergism: “It may seem hard to avoid the conclusion that Gregory's emphasis on virtue here leads to a synergism that is out of balance, especially if we consider Gregory's emphasis on the ‘worthiness’ (ἀξία) of the human person, which may seem to accord a meritorious status to human preparation for grace.” HERMANN-GEORG VAN LINGERICH, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΙΔΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΜΟΡΦΩΣΙΣ. *Ein ideengeschichtlicher Beitrag zur Einschmelzung antiker Philosopheme und christlicher Spekulationen zur Zeit der Hochpatristik. Untersucht am Beispiel der Schriften De professione christiana, De perfectione und De virginitate des Kappadokiens Gregor von Nyssa*, Münster 1994, 293–297, concludes on the basis of an analysis of the works mentioned in his title that the influence of Greek thought in these works is so strong that the salvation of human beings can occur in two ways: not just via God's gracious κατὰβασις to humankind, but also through the human ἀνάβασις to God.

390 *An et res* GNO III.III. 78,6–11: τούτου γὰρ ἕνεκεν ἡ λογικὴ φύσις ἦλθεν εἰς γένεσιν, ὥστε τὸν πλοῦτον τῶν θείων ἀγαθῶν μὴ ἀργὸν εἶναι, ἀλλ' οἷον ἀγγεία τινα προαιρετικὰ τὰ τῶν ψυχῶν δοχεῖα παρὰ τῆς τοῦ πᾶν συστήσαμένης σοφίας κατεσκευάσθη, ἐφ' ᾧ εἶναι τι χώρημα δεκτικὸν ἀγαθῶν τὸ αἰετῇ προσθήκῃ τοῦ εἰσχεομένου μείζον γινόμενον (transl. by VIRGINIA WOODS CALLAHAN).

The freedom that is acquired through freedom to choose the good through the superabundance of grace is characterised by *parrhesia*. In *Or dom* v, Gregory links the προαίρεσις with *parrhesia*:

and whatever else we may recognize to be connected with the divine, we should make ourselves like each one of these through free choice and thus acquire for ourselves the Prayer's boldness of speech.³⁹¹

In offering their προαίρεσις, something that is made possible by the Trinity who has the power to save, human beings do all that is in their power:

Rather, he will dedicate to the God above all things everything in his own capacity that would seem to be greater and transcendent, continually offering up all the honor, glory, and worship in his capacity to the one who holds the power of salvation. Now, the Father saves, as does the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Maced GNO III.I. 115,17–22

Gregory describes the human προαίρεσις that is oriented to the higher things, to what is truly good, as “all that lies in their own power and appears to be greater and higher”.³⁹² In this case, the human προαίρεσις is like the divine

391 *Or dom* v (SC 480,15–17; GNO VIII.I. 59,19–21): καὶ εἴ τι περὶ τὸ θεῖον ὁράται, πρὸς ἕκαστον διὰ τῆς προαιρέσεως ὁμοιούμενος, οὕτως ἑαυτῷ τὴν τῆς προσευχῆς παρρησίαν περιποιεῖται (GNO περιποιεῖσθω) (transl. by MARK DELCOGLIANO). In my article *Die Zunahme der Parrhesie in der Auslegung von Hohelied 5,7 durch Gregor von Nyssa*, in: GIULIO MASPERO & MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS & ILARIA VIGORELLI (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: In Canticum Cantorum. Analytical and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 13th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Rome, 17–20 September 2014)* (VCS 150), Leiden 2018, 444–453, I demonstrated that Gregory in *Cant* uses the growing *parrhesia* of the bride in his exegesis of Song 5:7 as an expression of her increasing love for her bridegroom, a love in which she allows her fellow creatures—in this case the daughters of Jerusalem—share as *postillons d'amour*. GERARD J.M. BARTELINK, *Quelques observations sur ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑ dans la littérature paléo-chrétienne* (Graecitas et Latinitas Christianorum Primaeva Supplementa III), Nijmegen 1970, 5–57, pp. 28–29, following JEAN DANIELOU (*Platonisme*, 87), points to the close bond between the growth towards ἀπάθεια and the acquiring of παρρησία. Gregory is the first to introduce the concept of παρρησία into the mystical ascent of human beings to God. On p. 56, Bartelink points to the dynamic character of this concept of παρρησία.

392 LENKA KARFIKOVÁ, *The Metaphor of the Mirror in Platonic Tradition and Gregory's Homilies on the Song of Songs*, in: GIULIO MASPERO & MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS & ILARIA VIGORELLI (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: In Canticum Cantorum. Analytical and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 13th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa (Rome, 17–20 September 2014)* (VCS 150), Leiden 2018, 265–287, pp. 278–285, points to the *loci* in which

προαίρεσις.³⁹³ The divine προαίρεσις, like that of the Holy Spirit in *Or cat*,³⁹⁴ is described by Gregory as προαιρετική δύναμις, which must be translated as *freedom of choice as power*.³⁹⁵ This is reflected in the human προαιρετική δύναμις, which, from a Stoic perspective, is capable of undergoing development and change, a germ that contains a purposeful plan of development *in nuce*.³⁹⁶ It is perfectly imaginable that the human προαίρεσις in all its limitations should be a reflection of God's power: the Father as the source of the power, the Son as the power of the Father, and the Holy Spirit as the spirit of the power.

The glory that we render to God consists in offering our good will and the accompanying good deeds, which have their source in God, who gives us the power and the glory to be virtuous. We offer God our good will as praise of him and as a sign of our gratitude, having been enabled to do so by the power of the Son, and the Spirit as the spirit of that power. In offering our own limited power, our προαίρεσις, our *reditus* to God is completed: this is the *oikonomia* of glory.³⁹⁷ See below in the part on true adoration.

the human soul is described as a living mirror, endowed with free will, such as in *Cant* XV GNO VI. 440,7–8: τὸ προαιρετικόν τε καὶ ἔμψυχον κάτοπτρον. Like the reflecting eye, the human soul can choose what it wishes to reflect: “for in a certain way we become fathers of ourselves when we form ourselves and generate ourselves and bring ourselves to the light through our good free will.” (ἐαυτῶν γὰρ τρόπον τινὰ πατέρες γινόμεθα, ὅταν διὰ τῆς ἀγαθῆς προαιρέσεως ἑαυτοὺς πλάσωμεν τε καὶ γενήσωμεν καὶ εἰς φῶς προαγάγωμεν, *Eccl* VI GNO V. 380,3–5). DAVID BENTLEY HART, *The Mirror of the Infinite*, 119: “such is the soul’s ‘glassy essence’ that it cannot help but assume the aspect of that towards which it is turned.” On p. 117 Hart speaks of “a specular economy”.

393 See pp. 142–143 ad *Maced* GNO III.I. 99,13.

394 *Or cat* GNO III.IV. 13,9–12: καθ’ ὁμοιότητα τοῦ θεοῦ λόγου καθ’ ὑπόστασιν οὖσαν, προαιρετικὴν, αὐτοκίνητον, ἐνεργόν, πάντοτε τὸ ἀγαθὸν αἰρουμένην καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν πρόθεσιν σύνδρομον ἔχουσαν τῇ βουλήσει τὴν δύναμιν.

395 MARTIN STRECK, *Das Schönste Gut*, 177, rightly argues that δύναμις should be interpreted as an attribute of προαίρεσις, even though the grammatical structure appears to require that προαιρετική be seen as an explanatory attribute of δύναμις.

396 REINHARD HÜBNER, Gregor von Nyssa und Markell von Ankyra, in: MARGUERITE HARL (ed.), *Écriture et culture philosophique dans la pensée de Grégoire de Nysse. Actes du Colloque de Chevetogne (22–26 Septembre 1969)*, Leiden 1971, 199–229, p. 228, points to a connection with the Stoics. Reinhard M. Hübner in his book *Die Einheit des Leibes Christi bei Gregor von Nyssa. Untersuchungen zum Ursprung der ‘Physischen’ Erlösungslehre* (Philosophia Patrum 11), Leiden 1974, 108, has rightly pointed out that δύναμις, too, belongs to the visual idiom of Gregory and therefore remains fundamentally inadequate.

397 DAVID BENTLEY HART, *The Mirror of the Infinite*, 121.

What do human beings actually adore when they praise and thank God?

If human beings wish to adore the greatness of the divine nature, they cannot praise the divine nature as an unknown entity. Its quality of being unknown makes it impossible to praise it. Human beings can only praise that which circles around the divine nature, as Scripture teaches through Ps LXX 144:4–7, which Gregory quotes in paraphrase.³⁹⁸ At this important moment in his argument, Gregory addresses the reader directly with a rhetorical question:

Do you see that awe is rendered by the prophet through the external ideas considered in connection with the divine nature?

Maced GNO III.I. 114,29–31

In view of the answer that Gregory expects, viz. that the reader will follow the prophet (sc. David, the author of the Psalm), he draws the portentous conclusion that the divine and blessed power is inaccessible to the human intellect and to the human heart. Like here in *Maced* GNO III.I. 114,24 (ἀλλά τι τῶν περὶ αὐτὴν θεωρουμένων ἐδόξαζε), Gregory had previously, in *Maced* GNO III.I. 91,33, limited human understanding and the corresponding expression in language through the specific relationship that he establishes between human thinking and the divine nature: he uses not περὶ αὐτῆς but περὶ αὐτὴν, which means that the human understanding cannot take the divine nature as the object of its thinking, cannot reach the divine nature as such, but must needs be remain on the outside of this nature, circling around it, always conscious of the *diastema* that separates it from God.

Gregory, in his long discourse on human language in his work *Eun* II, unlike Eunomius, distinguishes on principle between the being of things and the names that are given to them.³⁹⁹ The names that are given to things are inventions (εὐρήματα) by human beings, who use their God-given powers of logic and respond to the workings of the nature of things that they experience. Words that give a name to things are thus like the shadows of things. They take shape in relation to the movement of all that has been brought into existence; *Eun* II says:

398 Ps LXX 144:4–7: γενεὰ καὶ γενεὰ ἐπαινέσει τὰ ἔργα σου καὶ τὴν δύναμιν σου ἀπαγγελοῦσιν. τὴν μεγαλοπρέπειαν τῆς δόξης τῆς ἁγιωσύνης σου λαλήσουσιν καὶ τὰ θαυμάσιά σου διηγῶνται. καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῶν φοβερῶν σου ἐροῦσιν καὶ τὴν μεγαλωσύνην σου διηγῶνται. μνήμην τοῦ πληθους τῆς χρηστότητός σου ἐξερεύξονται καὶ τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου ἀγαλλιάσονται.

399 GIULIO MASPERO, *Trinity and Man*, 99–147, provides a clear exposition of the relationship between language and reality; this book was of great help for this part.

and the words are a kind of shadow of the realities, matching the movements of things which exist.⁴⁰⁰

With their words, human beings can approach the way in which things and people present themselves to us, the workings that proceed from God, but it remains well beyond human capabilities to comprehend the essence of all things, of human beings, of God. It is precisely the eternal and unlimited nature of the uncreated God that is inaccessible to the human mind. God's essence escapes all names that the human *epinoia* can give. Human beings can seek *diastemic* analogies for God's saving activities that are mediated *diastemically*.⁴⁰¹ The Holy Spirit, in his economy of love for humankind (ἡ φιλόανθρωπος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος οἰκονομία, *Eun* III GNO II. 197,8), with the aid of analogies (ἀναλογικῶς, *Eun* III GNO II. 197,18), in human language, leads us to a higher understanding of the divine things.⁴⁰² Gregory calls the divine being ἀόριστον, boundless and limitless. He even implies an ἀόριστον that transcends itself. The divine being constantly transcends itself! Gregory shows that in our praise of God, we do not praise God's nature.⁴⁰³ This is a deep awareness of the *diastema* that separates God and his creation.

It is with good reason that Gregory quotes Ps LXX 144:5a (τὴν μεγαλοπρέπειαν τῆς δόξης τῆς ἁγιωσύνης σου λαλήσουσιν) very precisely here in *Maced*. He gives the reason for this in *Eccl* VII:

⁴⁰⁰ *Eun* II GNO I. 269,13–14: ὥσπερ σκιαὶ τῶν πραγμάτων εἰσὶν αἱ φωναί, πρὸς τὰς κινήσεις τῶν ὑφεστώτων σχηματιζόμεναι.

⁴⁰¹ See SCOT DOUGLASS, Gregory of Nyssa and Theological Imagination, in: LENKA KARFIKOVÁ ET AL. (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium II. An English Version with Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the 10th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 2004* (VCS 82), Leiden 2007, 461–471.

⁴⁰² MIGUEL BRUGAROLAS, The Philanthropic Economy of the Holy Spirit. Notes on *Contra Eunomium* III 6,32, in: JOHAN LEEMANS & MATTHIEU CASSIN (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III, Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Leuven, 14–17 September 2010* (VCS 124), Leiden 2014, 500–511, points to this striking statement about the Spirit in *Eun* III, where the Son's economy of love for humankind is permanently to the fore. This description of the Spirit is specific to Gregory (also in *Ref Eun* GNO II. 349,19–20; comparable in *Inscr* GNO V. 160,26–27, *Steph* I GNO X.I. 78,1–2) and does not occur in Origen, Athanasius, Basil, and Gregory of Nazianzus, as Brugarolas observes, p. 505.

⁴⁰³ ANNA NGAIRE WILLIAMS, *The Divine Sense. The Intellect in Patristic Theology*, Cambridge 2007, offers an extensive reflection on Gregory of Nyssa's epistemology (as well as that of Gregory of Nazianzus). However, this book entirely ignores the importance that the sacrament of baptism has for the redeemed persons' knowledge.

That is why, when speech reaches what is beyond speech, then is a moment for keeping silent, and to keep the wonder of that ineffable Power unexpressed in the secrecy of inward knowledge, since it knows that even the *ancient and great profets spoke of the works of God, and not of God, when they said: 'Who will speak of the mighty acts of the Lord (Ps LXX 105:2)?' and: 'I shall relate all your works (Ps LXX 74:3; Ps LXX 117:17).' and 'Generation upon generation shall praise your works (Ps LXX 144:4a).' These things they tell, and they recount them fully and commit to speech the story of what has been done. But once their speech is about what transcends all thought, they immediately enjoin silence by the things they say. They say: 'Of the splendour of the glory of his holiness there is no end (Ps LXX 144:3, 5a).' What a wonderful thing, that speech was afraid to approach the thought of the divine nature, since it does not comprehend the wonder even of one of its external attributes! For it does not say that there is no end to the Being of God, deeming it presumptuous even to consider it at all, but it expresses in words wonder at the splendour observed in the glory.⁴⁰⁴

Gregory reaches a position here in *Maced* by way of conclusion that is similar to his statements in *Ecccl*. His awareness of the immeasurable distance that separates God's nature from human beings in their miserable attempts to praise and adore him permeates his almost lyrical description of God's blessed power at a great distance from all our human inquiring, from all our human striving. It is precisely this distance that can make us understand why Gregory, in response to God's blessed power, presents the offering by human beings of their human freedom of choice as their only possible, appropriate response to God's greatness, but without describing this as the power of human beings, which he does elsewhere (προαιρετική δύναμις). Gregory limits himself to the designation προ-

404 *Ecccl* VII GNO V. 414,9–415,7: διὰ τοῦτο ὅταν ἔλθῃ εἰς τὰ ὑπὲρ λόγον ὁ λόγος, γίνεται τότε καιρὸς τοῦ σιγᾶν καὶ τῆς ἀφράστου ἐκείνης δυνάμεως ἀνερμήνευτον ἐν τῷ ἀπορρήτῳ τῆς συνειδήσεως ἔχειν τὸ θαῦμα, εἰδὸτα ὅτι καὶ οἱ μεγάλοι (προφήται) τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ οὐ τὸν θεὸν ἐλάλουν λέγοντες· Τίς λαλήσει τὰς δυναστείας τοῦ κυρίου; καὶ Διηγῆσομαι πάντα τὰ ἔργα σου καὶ Γενεὰ καὶ γενεὰ ἐπαινέσει τὰ ἔργα σου. ταῦτα λαλοῦσι καὶ περὶ τούτων διεξέρχονται καὶ τὴν τῶν γεγονότων ἐξαγόρευσιν τῇ φωνῇ ἐπιτρέπουσιν. ὅταν δὲ περὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ὑπερανεστῶτος πάσης ἐννοίας ὁ λόγος ᾗ, σιωπὴν ἀντικρὺς, δι' ὧν λέγουσι, νομοθετοῦσι. λέγουσι γὰρ ὅτι τῆς μεγαλοπρεπείας τῆς δόξης τῆς ἀγιωσύνης αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἔστι πέρας. ὦ τοῦ θαύματος! πῶς ἐφοβήθη τῇ τῆς θείας φύσεως θεωρίᾳ προσεγγίσει ὁ λόγος, ὅς γε οὐδὲ τῶν ἔξωθεν τινος ἐπιθεωρουμένων τὸ θαῦμα κατέλαβεν. οὐ γὰρ εἶπεν, ὅτι τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ θεοῦ πέρας οὐκ ἔστι, τολμηρὸν κρίνων ὅλως τὸ καὶ εἰς ἐννοίαν τοῦτο λαβεῖν, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐπιθεωρουμένην τῇ δόξῃ μεγαλοπρέπειαν θαυμάζει τῷ λόγῳ (transl. by STUART GEORGE HALL).

αἰρέσεις, the simple and humble, in fact the only, response that human beings can give in their attempt to praise and adore God.

How does our προαίρεσις, which we offer God in his blessed power, function?

In *Cant*, Gregory explains how our προαίρεσις functions in relation to God's blessed power, as the focusing of the eye of the soul on God's light, the light of the Holy Spirit, the eye in which the Trinitarian mystery of love becomes visible as in a mirror.⁴⁰⁵

In *Cant* IV GNO VI. 104,2–4, Gregory compares the human being to a mirror that adapts its form to match the reflections of the respective preferences (τῶν προαιρέσεων).⁴⁰⁶ Immediately prior to this, Gregory introduces the Logos as the bridegroom who declares his bride to be beautiful:

You have drawn near to me as you have rejected the fellowship of evil, and in drawing near to the archetypal Beauty, you too have become beautiful, informed like a mirror by my appearance.⁴⁰⁷

In *Cant* V GNO VI. 150,9–151,2, Gregory links the archetypal beauty, whose light reflects in the bride as in a mirror, with the Holy Spirit. In the light to which the bride has drawn close, and which she becomes as she reflects it, the beautiful form of the dove becomes visible, the very dove whose form revealed the *parousia* of the Holy Spirit, as Luke among others recounts (καὶ καταβῆναι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον σωματικῶς εἶδεν ὡς περιστερὰν ἐπ' αὐτόν, Lk 3:22):

and what it (sc. the bride) looks upon is the archetypal Beauty. When, therefore, it has drawn close to the Light, it becomes light, and in this light

405 KERSTIN BJERRE-ASPEGREN, *Bräutigam, Sonne und Mutter. Studien zu einigen Gottesmetaphern bei Gregor von Nyssa*, Lund 1977, dedicates an entire chapter (pp. 114–170), entitled *Spiegelmetaphern in Gregors Bildersprache—Das Zurückgeworfene Licht, Das Spiegelbild der Sonne und das Auge der Seele*, to Gregory's mirror metaphors, including a subsection (pp. 121–125) called *Das Auge der Seele*. Unfortunately, *Cant* V GNO VI. 150,9–151,2 does not feature among the many *loci* listed by the author in which Gregory uses this metaphor, although the comparable *locus* *Cant* IV GNO VI. 105,8–106,11 does.

406 *Cant* IV GNO VI. 104,2–4: κατόπτρῳ γὰρ ἔοικεν ὡς ἀληθῶς τὸ ἀνθρώπινον κατὰ τὰς τῶν προαιρέσεων ἐμφάσεις μεταμορφούμενον. FRANZ DÜNZL, *Braut und Bräutigam. Die Auslegung des Canticum durch Gregor von Nyssa*, Tübingen 1993, 339, on the basis of this *locus* points to the *Eidolatheorie*, in the course of his argument that it is necessary to be cautious when speaking about Gregory's journey to God as mystical ecstasy.

407 *Cant* IV GNO VI. 103,17–104,2: ἀποστάσα μὲν τῆς τοῦ κακοῦ κοινωνίας ἐμοὶ προσήγγισας, πλησιάσασα δὲ τῷ ἀρχετύπῳ κάλλει καὶ αὕτῃ καλῇ γέγονας οἷόν τι κάτοπτρον τῷ ἐμῷ χαρακτήρι ἐμμορφωθείσα (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

the beautiful form of the dove is imaged—and the dove I am talking about is the one whose form makes known the presence of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁰⁸

In his exegesis of Song 6:9, Gregory identifies the human being who has come to share in the glory of the Spirit (δεκτικὸς δὲ τῆς τοῦ πνεύματος δόξης γενόμενος, Cant XV GNO VI. 467,21) with the perfect dove, to whom the bridegroom says: “only one is my dove, my perfect one”. The dove is the child of the dove that flew down from heaven upon the Jordan:

Since, then, ‘that which is born of the Spirit is spirit’ and the child is a dove, the child’s mother must surely be a dove as well—the dove that flew down from heaven upon Jordan, as John bears witness (cf. Jn 1:32).⁴⁰⁹

The daughters, the queens and the concubines will pronounce blessed the bride who became a dove, as Song LXX 6:9 (εἶδον αὐτὴν θυγατέρες καὶ μακαριοῦσιν αὐτήν, βασιλίσσαι καὶ παλλακαὶ καὶ αἰνέσουσιν αὐτήν) says. This is proof of the fact that they all, of every rank, also desire to become a dove, and thus to merge together in the community of the good in Christ Jesus, so that God will be all in all (cf. 1 Cor 15:28). This statement concludes *Cant*. Immediately prior to this there is a statement that is important for our interpretation of *Maced*, and that shows how we must understand the *reditus* to God:

for the course that leads to such blessedness is the same for all souls, no matter what status they start from.⁴¹⁰

Our προαίρεσις that we offer to God, functions like a mirror in which the beauty of Christ is reflected, as Gregory shows in *Cant* XV:

The same thing comes about with a mirror when—granted that it is put together with skill and in conformity with its function—it displays in itself on its clear surface the exact imprint (τὸν χαρακτῆρα) of the face

408 *Cant* V GNO VI. 150,18–151,2: βλέπει δὲ πρὸς τὸ ἀρχέτυπον κάλλος. διὰ τοῦτο τῷ φωτὶ προσεγγίσασα φῶς γίνεται, τῷ δὲ φωτὶ τὸ καλὸν τῆς περιστερᾶς εἶδος ἐνεικονίζεται, ἐκείνης λέγω τῆς περιστερᾶς, ἥς τὸ εἶδος τὴν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος παρουσίαν ἐγνώρισεν (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

409 *Cant* XV GNO VI. 468,10–13: ἐπεὶ οὖν τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος πνεῦμά ἐστι, περιστέρα δὲ τὸ τέκνον, περιστέρα πάντως καὶ ἡ τοῦ τέκνου μήτηρ ἐστίν, ἡ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰορδάνην ἐξ οὐρανῶν καταπτᾶσα, καθὼς Ἰωάννης μαρτύρεται (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

410 *Cant* XV GNO VI. 468,15–16: κοινὸς γὰρ ἐκ παντὸς τάγματος πρόκειται πάσαις ταῖς ψυχαῖς δρόμος πρὸς τὴν τοιαύτην μακαριότητα (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

it reflects. In just this way, the soul, when she has put herself together in a way suited to her function and cast off every material defilement, has graven into herself the pure look of the inviolate beauty (cf. Wisd 7:26). Hence the life-endued and choice-endowed mirror has this word to say: 'Since I focus upon the face of my kinsman with my entire being, the entire beauty of his form is seen in me.'⁴¹¹

In the quoted text, the human προαίρεσις is associated with a mirror. The beauty of the beloved is reflected in the mirror of human beings who have oriented their προαίρεσις towards God.

The offering by human beings of their προαίρεσις as their only praise and gift to God functions as the focusing of the eye of the soul on God's light, the light of the Holy Spirit, the eye in which the Trinitarian mystery of love becomes visible as if in a mirror.

Earlier in *Cant* (*Cant* x GNO VI. 304,3–5), Gregory compares the human προαίρεσις that is offered to God to a branch that bears fruit and is plucked by God:

And our fruit is the faculty of choice that of its own accord entrusts its soul, as with a branch, to the God who plucks us.⁴¹²

This equation of the προαίρεσις with fruit occurs in the context of Gregory's exegesis of Song LXX 4:16c–d:

καταβήτω ἀδελφιδός μου εἰς κήπον αὐτοῦ καὶ φαγέτω καρπὸν ἀκροδρῶν αὐτοῦ (Let my love come down into his garden and eat the fruit of his fruit trees).

The fact that the beloved comes down points to the work of the love of human-kind. The Lord comes down so that we, having been taken by the hand, can be lifted up to the Highest.⁴¹³ *Exitus* and *reditus* in a nutshell.

411 *Cant* XV GNO VI. 440,1–10: καὶ οἶον ἐπὶ τοῦ κατόπτρου γίνεται, ὅταν τεχνικῶς τε καὶ καταλλήλως τῇ χρεῖᾳ κατεσκευασμένον ἐν καθαρᾷ τῇ ἐπιφανείᾳ δι' ἀκριβείας ἐν ἑαυτῷ δείξῃ τοῦ ἐμφανέντος προσώπου τὸν χαρακτήρα, οὕτως ἑαυτὴν ἡ ψυχὴ προσφόρως τῇ χρεῖᾳ κατασκευάσασα καὶ πάσαν ὑλικὴν ἀπορριψαμένη κηλίδα καθαρὸν τοῦ ἀκηράτου κάλλους ἑαυτῇ τὸ εἶδος ἐνετυπώσατο. λέγει οὖν τὴν φωνὴν ταύτην τὸ προαιρετικόν τε καὶ ἔμψυχον κάτοπτρον ὅτι· ἐπειδὴ ἐγὼ ὅλῳ τῷ κύκλῳ τὸ τοῦ ἀδελφιδοῦ πρόσωπον βλέπω, διὰ τοῦτο ὅλον τῆς ἐκείνου μορφῆς τὸ κάλλος ἐν ἐμοὶ καθοράται (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

412 *Cant* x GNO VI. 304,3–5: καρπὸς δὲ ἡμῶν ἡ προαίρεσις γίνεται ἢ τῷ δρεπομένῳ ἡμᾶς θεῷ δι' ἑαυτῆς ὡς διὰ τινος ἀκρεμόνος τὴν ψυχὴν ἐγχειρίζουσα (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

413 *Cant* x GNO VI. 304,16–305,2: ἡ δὲ κατάβασις τὸ τῆς φιλανθρωπίας ἔργον διασημαίνει· ἐπειδὴ

The offering of our *προαίρεσις* as praise and gift to God functions within the context of God's *exitus* and our *reditus*, as we are taken by the hand by God.

What is the right disposition of the true adorer?

God's blessed power fully transcends the human attempt to approach God, to see God, to reason about God, to find words for God and to focus the heart on God. Anyone who has even the slightest sense of God's immeasurable power and the poverty of human nature will condemn the folly of those who begrudge the Spirit adoration or worship. Anyone who underestimates the distance between God and human beings, between the power of God and that of human beings, is characterised by blind folly, like Gregory had before, in *Maced GNO III.I. 107,29–108,5*, condemned the folly of denying the distance between God and humankind, specifically that between human being and the Spirit:

So then, since every summit of human capacity is below the majesty of the one who is worshiped—for this is what the account intimates through 'the footstool under his feet'—look at the vanity of these people! They imagine that they possess within themselves a capacity so great that it is within their power to define the rank and honor of the invaluable nature. For this reason, they think themselves able to judge the Holy Spirit unworthy of some of the honors that have been contrived for it, as if their capacity could be greater in any way whatsoever than the dignity of the Spirit!

Here, again, Gregory contrasts God's immeasurable power (ἡ θεία τε καὶ μακαρία δύναμις, *Maced GNO III.I. 114,31–32*) with the limited human power (οὕτω μικρὰς καὶ εὐτελοῦς τῆς δυνάμεως, *Maced GNO III.I. 115,6–7*). Here, too, the concept of δύναμις plays a major role. Blind folly is a euphemism for lack of humility. God's δύναμις transcends the human intelligence, and only the actions of God that proceed from this, his ἐνεργεῖαι, can be comprehended by the human intellect.

Of what does the true worship of God consist?

Here, at the end of the work, human limitations, divine power, belief in the divinity of the three persons of the Triune Godhead who saves people, and

γὰρ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλως ἀναληφθῆναι ἡμᾶς πρὸς τὸν ὕψιστον, εἰ μὴ πρὸς τὸ χθαμαλὸν ἐπικλιθεῖν ὁ Ἀναλαμβάνων τοὺς πραεῖς κύριος, διὰ τοῦτο ἡ ἀνιοῦσα πρὸς τὸ ἄνω ψυχὴ τὴν παρὰ τοῦ ὑπερκειμένου χειραγωγίαν προσκαλουμένη ὑποκαταβῆναι αὐτὸν τοῦ ἰδίου μεγέθους εὐχεται, ἵνα τοῖς κάτω ἐφικτὸς γένηται (transl. by RICHARD A. NORRIS JR.).

human praise of this Triune Godhead are all tied together. The working of God's power, his one *δύναμις*, shows forth the unity of the Triune Godhead.⁴¹⁴

Human beings in this earthly existence already proleptically make their *reditus* to God who saves them, that is: who makes it possible for them to engage in this *reditus* to the Triune Godhead. Human beings who are conscious of their own limitations entrust their salvation to the Father *and* the Son *and* the Holy Spirit, who together are one power, one goodness, one life-creating power, one divinity, one life. Once the *reditus* to God has come about (in the Spirit, through the Son, to the Father), that is: once human beings have been found worthy of the divine epiphany, all that remains for human beings to do is to offer praise, first of the Father, including the Son with the Father, without separating the Spirit from the Son.

At the end, the patriarch Abraham is introduced as the example to be imitated. Abraham called himself dust and ashes after his encounter with the three men during his attempt to plead with the Lord for Sodom and the few just who lived there. Abraham is worthy of imitation, Gregory says, because he experienced his *reditus* even during his life as an ascent to God, and because he accepted the belief that God is greater and higher than any epistemological designations. In *Eun* II, Abraham appears as the one who makes his *anabasis* to God, and he is known as the Father of the faith. In *Eun* II Gregory calls Abraham's words that he was dust and ashes an expression of Abraham's stunned silence and his powerlessness to say in words what he had seen in the spirit. After the ecstatic experience that befell him, Abraham looked down from the heights of his contemplation upon his human frailty.⁴¹⁵ Gregory adds that the earth and the cinders simultaneously signify soullessness and sterility. Abraham teaches us that only faith can open the way to God and connect the searching mind of human beings with God's incomprehensible nature.⁴¹⁶ In sum, human beings

414 FRANZ DÜNZL, *Pneuma. Funktionen des Theologischen Begriffs in Frühchristlicher Literatur* (Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband 30), Münster 2000, 163 n. 348, in his chapter *Der Pneumabegriff in trinitätstheologischen Reflexionen*, in a discussion of Athenagoras's apologetic writings (2nd century), points to the latter's influence on Gregory of Nyssa, who bases the conclusion of God's unity, among other things, upon God's *δύναμις*. He has pointed to the letter of the Synod of Constantinople of 382 to the bishops of the West, which affirms belief in one Deity, one power, and one essence: θεότητος καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ οὐσίας μιᾶς ... πιστευομένης (Theodoretus *Historia ecclesiastica* V 9).

415 *Eun* II GNO I. 253,18–22: Διὰ τοι τοῦτο μετὰ τὴν ἐπιπεσοῦσαν ἐκείνην ἔκστασιν ἐκ τῶν ὑψηλῶν θεαμάτων πάλιν εἰς τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην κατακύψας ἀσθένειαν Ἐγὼ δὲ εἰμι, φησί, γῆ καὶ σποδός, τουτέστιν ἄφωνός τε καὶ ἀνερέργητος ὡς πρὸς τὴν τοῦ νοηθέντος ἀγαθοῦ ἐρμηνείαν.

416 *Eun* II GNO I. 253,22–30: ἡ γὰρ γῆ δοκεῖ μοι καὶ ἡ τέφρα τὸ ἄψυχον καὶ τὸ ἄγονον ἅμα διασημαίνειν, καὶ οὕτω νόμος πίστεως γίνεται τῷ μετὰ ταῦτα βίῳ, διδάσκων τῇ κατ' αὐτὸν ἱστορίᾳ τοὺς τῷ

in all their weakness are dependent upon God's omnipotence; human beings dedicate themselves to adoring the divine nature precisely in awareness of their weakness.⁴¹⁷

What do human beings actually have to offer? They have themselves to offer to God, that is: without reservation and without distinction, they can offer all that appears greater and higher in their capability to God, that is: their *προαίρεσις* that is oriented to God. In the human *reditus* to God, human beings send up to God all that their miserable human capacity, their human *δύναμις*, allows them to give, in honour and glory and adoration. It is the consciousness of God's infinite transcendence—expressed in the rendering of honour according to capacity, however feeble, but in the knowledge that it is impossible to add any honour to God, who is glory by nature and who causes this glory to progress between the three divine persons—which opens human beings to God's saving actions. The saving actions of the three divine persons who each share in the one divine power. The consciousness of human inability to add anything to God's honour is intimately connected with the consciousness of human inability to know God's essence, his divine nature. The Spirit plays a key role here. Due to their acknowledgement of his divine nature, his full sharing in the work of creation, and the worship of the Spirit that befits this, human beings can, thanks to the saving power of the Triune Godhead in the Spirit, who binds Father and Son together, be drawn through the Son to the Father, to share in the inner-Trinitarian life of the divine persons. This participation in the divine mystery, this being drawn into the divine life of the Triune Godhead, is the true worship of God: the praise of human beings who give themselves fully to the three divine persons from whom their salvation comes.

What does Gregory mean by the one power of God?

After Gregory has held up to the reader the salvation of humankind by the three divine persons, he immediately adds that persons who know this do not chop up their faith into a plurality of powers and deities, but confess their faith in a single power, a single goodness, a single life-creating power, a single deity, a

θεῶ προσιόντας ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλως προσεγγίσει θεῶ, μὴ πίστει μεσιτευούσης καὶ συναποούσης δι' ἑαυτῆς τὸν ἐπιζητοῦντα νοῦν πρὸς τὴν ἀκατάληπτον φύσιν.

417 In *Beat VII GNO VII.11*. 149,23–150,1 Gregory lists a number of metaphors that Biblical figures use to describe human beings in their insignificance, including Abraham, who calls himself dust and ashes: τί ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος ὡς πρὸς τὴν θείαν φύσιν κρινόμενος; τίνος εἶπω τῶν ἁγίων φωνὴν δι' ἧς ἐξευτελίζεται τὸ ἀνθρώπινον; κατὰ τὸν Ἀβραάμ γῆ καὶ σποδός, κατὰ τὸν Ἡσαΐαν χόρτος, κατὰ τὸν Δαβὶδ οὐδὲ χόρτος ἀλλ' εἰκὸς χόρτῳ—ὁ μὲν γὰρ λέγει, Πᾶσα σὰρξ χόρτος· οὗτος δὲ φησιν, Ἄνθρωπος ὡσεὶ χόρτος—κατὰ τὸν Ἐκκλησιαστήν ματαιότης, κατὰ τὸν Παῦλον ταλαιπωρία.

single life. This statement by Gregory is made against the background of the φύσις—δύναμις—ἐνέργεια—ἔργον sequence. The three divine persons together work the same works on the basis of their common activity, the result of their single power, a proof that the three divine persons possess one and the same divine nature. Here, too, the key sentence of *Maced* (*Maced* GNO III.1. 100,1–3) about God's power applies.

The unity of the Triune Godhead is visible to human beings in the common saving work of the three divine persons. There is a fixed pattern to God's actions; the sequence is that of the baptismal command of Mt 28:19; the manner is determined by the key sentence: from the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit. Gregory requires this unity to escape the accusation of tritheism. At the conclusion of *Maced*, Gregory uses full and rhetorical force to express the content of the orthodox faith:

For this reason also, he entrusts his own salvation to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He does not chop up the faith into a multitude of powers and deities, but believes in one power, one goodness, one life-giving power, one deity, one life.

Maced GNO III.1. 115,22–26

Given the Father as the source of the power, the Son as the power, and the Spirit as the spirit of the power, human beings will offer up their gratitude for the salvation that issues forth from the three, and will begin with the source, the Father, will include the Son with the Father, and will not separate the Holy Spirit from the Only-Begotten One. In this gratitude, the three divine persons receive honour, glory, and worship.⁴¹⁸

The connection between God and humankind is wrought by God's power, that is by the Father as the source of the power, by the Son as the power, and by the Spirit as the spirit of the power. By using this key sentence, Gregory can present the unity of activity of the Trinity as flowing from the immanent bond between the three divine persons. Human beings with their own miserable power are drawn into God's Trinitarian life thanks to God's life-giving power.

⁴¹⁸ JOHN MILBANK, Gregory of Nyssa: the Force of Identity, in: LEWIS AYRES & GARETH JONES (ed.), *Christian Origins. Theology, Rhetoric and Community*, London 1998, 94–116, p. 105, speaks of the “the notion of active reception”. On p. 95: “Here to receive is somehow already the movement of a counter-donation on the part of the will.” On p. 100: “so all three persons display equally the saving *dynamis* of God: In this case an economic trinitarian argument is also automatically an immanent one.”

What doxology does Gregory use to conclude his work?

Gregory concludes his work with a telling doxology:

In this way, he will offer up thanksgiving for his own life, starting with the Father, grasping the Son along with the Father, and not separating the Spirit from the Only-Begotten. Thus he will render to the God above all with the Only-Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit honor, glory, and worship unto endless ages. Amen.

Maced GNO III.I. 115,26–32

The key sentence of *Maced* is present up to the very end of his work. Human beings who have made their *reditus*, that is an ascent, an *anabasis*, to God, will offer up their gratitude (described only here as τὴν εὐχαριστίαν, *Maced GNO III.I. 115,26*) for their own life, and will begin with the Father (ἐκ πατρὸς ἀρχόμενος, *Maced GNO III.I. 115,27*) as source of the power. In doing so, human beings in their gratitude will include the Son as God's own power (τὸν υἱὸν τῷ πατρὶ συμπεριλαμβάνων, *Maced GNO III.I. 115,28*), while the close bond between the Son as the Anointed One and the Spirit as the Anointing, or as God's power and the spirit of God's power respectively, is unbroken (τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα τοῦ μονογενοῦς οὐ χωρίζων, *Maced GNO III.I. 115,28–29*).

In the conclusion, as in the rest of the work, honour, glory and adoration are given to the Father, who is called the highest God, who receives this honour in union with the Only-Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit with whom he is connected. Thus Gregory follows in the footsteps of his deceased brother Basil, who in his *De Spiritu Sancto* defended this very form of doxology.⁴¹⁹ Equally telling, in view of the absolute obligation to respect the Spirit's *homotimia*, are Gregory's final words τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν καὶ προσκύνησιν (*Maced GNO III.I. 115,30–31*), which follow immediately after τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι (*Maced GNO III.I. 115,30*).

419 Basil *De Spiritu Sancto* (I 3,1–5): Προσευχομένῳ μοί πρῶτην μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ, καὶ ἀμφοτέρως τὴν δοξολογίαν ἀποπληροῦντι τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρὶ, νῦν μὲν μετὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ σὺν τῷ Πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ, νῦν δὲ διὰ τοῦ Υἱοῦ ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι, ἐπέσκηψάν τινες τῶν παρόντων, ξενιζούσαις ἡμᾶς φωναῖς κεχρησθαι λέγοντες, καὶ ἅμα πρὸς ἀλλήλας ὑπεναντίως ἐχοῦσαις.

PART 3
Synthesis



ἀλλὰ πηγή μὲν δυνάμεώς ἐστιν ὁ πατήρ, δύναμις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως
δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον

Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–3

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The Holy Spirit Is the Spirit of the Father's Power

These concluding chapters will address the central themes of *Maced*, arranged according to a systematic theological rationale. Gregory's statement that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of the power that is the Son, and of which the Father is the source, will be the guiding principle for this systematic theological arrangement. This affirmation is the foundation that underlies the structure of the work, and it also defines Gregory's vision of God, who reveals himself to human beings as the Triune Godhead, who desires to draw human beings into his divine glory: the one divine δύναμις reveals the divine Trinity with its own ἀκολουθία, which is visible in creation and is reflected in salvation history. Thanks to the *exitus* of the Son, who goes out to humankind from the Father and bestows the Spirit upon it, human beings are able to accomplish the opposite movement, the *reditus*: going in the Spirit to the Son, who brings humankind back to the Father.

1 The Knowability of the Spirit

1.1 *Scripture, the Teachings of the Fathers, and the Common Notions*

When it comes to the human capacity to know the Triune Godhead, and therefore the Holy Spirit, Gregory appeals to the teaching of Scripture, the teachings of the Fathers that flow from this (i.e. the doctrines of Nicaea), and to the 'common notions' (κοινὰ ἔννοιαι). The teaching of Scripture and the common notions invite human beings to profess the Triune Godhead by obeying Scripture and the Fathers by professing the Triune Godhead.

Gregory enunciates his obedience to the teachings of the Fathers and his profession of the ensuing insights on the Holy Spirit (ὅσα τοῖς τῶν πατέρων ἐπόμενοι δόγμασιν ὁμολογοῦμεν περὶ τοῦ πνεύματος, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,18–19). He also invokes the testimony of Scripture. Complying with the baptismal command in Mt 28:19, where Jesus commands his disciples to teach (μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) and then to baptise, he is a student first (μεμαθήκαμεν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,23), so that he can be a teacher of the teaching (τῆς τῶν γραφῶν διδασκαλίας, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,29) of the Scriptures that come from God (θείας γραφῆς, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,21; ταῖς θεοπνεύστοις φωναῖς, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,24). On this basis, he *professes* that the Spirit belongs to the divine nature (θείας δὲ φύσεως εἶναι τὸ πνεῦμα) ὁμολογούντες, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,27–

28). In addition to “the teaching of Scripture” (τῆς τῶν γραφῶν διδασκαλίας), Gregory appeals to “the common notions” (κοινὰ ἔννοιαι).¹ These notions support Gregory’s profession of the undividedness of the divine nature and of the Spirit’s participation in this.

The Scriptures inspired by God and the teachings, τὰ δόγματα, of the Fathers, which are consistent with God’s words, are interpreted by Gregory’s opponents, the Pneumatomachi, according to their whim (πρὸς τὸ δοκοῦν ἐκλαμβάνοντες, *Maced GNO III.I.* 89,19–20), i.e. arbitrarily, which proves their lack of wisdom. Gregory’s starting point is Scripture, which he reads in docility to the teachings of the Fathers, which in turn lead to the familiar profession of faith and to his instruction about it. Scripture comes from God, is inspired by God (θείας γραφῆς, *Maced GNO III.I.* 90,21; ταῖς θεοπνεύστοις φωναῖς, *Maced GNO III.I.* 90,24) and is therefore the rule of Christian piety, as it provides the testimony of truth. The assurance of this comes from tradition, the teachings of the Fathers, who, as a normative source, assist Scripture in defending against the arbitrary interpretations of the heretics. Tradition as a defence against the heretics encompasses not only doctrines, but also, and primarily, the practice of Christian piety, such as baptism according to the baptismal command given in Mt 28:19. *Maced GNO III.I.* 89,18–21 gives a clear example of the primacy of Scripture and tradition over and above the arbitrariness of the heretics:

By seizing, as they see fit, upon all that we confess regarding the Spirit following the teachings of the fathers, they provide themselves with a pretext for accusing us of impiety.

The clever arbitrariness of the heretics is a sign of their unhealthy curiosity. Gregory contrasts the effects of this, as they appear in their complicated sophisms, with the simplicity of the words of Scripture, which have an explicit goal: the return of human beings to God.²

The Spirit is mentioned third in the sequence, after the Father and the Son. This is a sequence that comes from tradition (τῇ τάξει τῆς παραδόσεως, *Maced GNO III.I.* 100,22), as the baptismal command of Mt 28:19 clearly shows.³

1 MARIETTE CANÉVET, *Grégoire de Nysse*, 65–81, in chapter three of the first part, entitled *L’usage de l’Écriture*, has demonstrated that and how for Gregory, the faith, as Scripture and the Fathers teach it, transcends any human inquiry.

2 MARIETTE CANÉVET, *Grégoire de Nysse*, 75–76.

3 EVERETT FERGUSON, *Paradosis and Traditio: A Word Study*, in: RONNIE J. ROMBS & ALEXANDER Y. HWANG (ed.), *Tradition & the Rule of Faith in the Early Church. Essays in Honor of Joseph T. Lienhard s.j.*, Washington 2010, 3–29, has demonstrated the shift in meaning of *Para-*

It is the Spirit in whom Scripture can be read correctly; the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life, as Paul states in 2 Cor 3:6.

1.2 *The Profession of the Indivisible Connection between the Spirit and the Father and the Son*

The commons notions make it possible to understand the relevant biblical passages correctly. On the basis of Scripture (πεπίστευται, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,3*) and the commons notions (θεωρεῖται, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,4*), it can be said that the divine nature has no greater or lesser, is not changeable but simple, uniform, and non-composite. Given this simplicity of the divine nature, perfection is included in any designation of the divine, that is perfection in any term associated with goodness. This is how the triad divine nature—simplicity—perfection, that is perfect goodness, comes about. However, human understanding cannot have the divine nature as an object of its thought, is unable to reach and touch the divine nature, but is of necessity limited to the exterior of this nature, circling around it, always conscious of the *diastema* that separates it from God. Human beings can only make true statements about the divine nature on the basis of their own human limitations, which must be described as εὐσεβῶς (*Maced GNO III.I. 91,33*); that is to say: with due respect for the *diastema* between God and humankind. Such statements never grasp the essence of the divine nature, but, circling around it, outline it truthfully (περὶ αὐτήν, not περὶ αὐτῆς, *Maced GNO III.I. 91,33*). In thinking about the divine nature and in ascribing a predicate to that nature, however true this may be in itself, human beings cannot therefore grasp the essence of the divine nature, but they can form an image, given their human limitations, of partial aspects of God, of God's activities, his ἐνέργειαι, expressions of God's δύνάμεις. Positive statements about God are first and foremost representations of what human beings can—given the *diastema* that separates them from God—piously think about God's activities. These indications serve to preserve the respectful distance between God and humankind and to create scope for adoration.

Gregory repeatedly emphasises that his faith leads him to make affirmations that profess the Triune Godhead and the Holy Spirit as the third divine person. He uses the powerful statement πιστεύοντες καὶ ὁμολογούντες (*Maced GNO III.I. 100,14*), repeated by ἀχώριστον τὴν συνάφειαν ὁμολογούντες in *Maced GNO III.I. 100,23–24* to profess the indivisible connection between the Spirit and the Father and the Son, and thus the full participation of the Spirit in the

dosis: from the active sense of transmission to the passive sense of that which is transmitted, from action to content. Towards the end of the fourth century, another meaning was added to this: the manner of tradition, specifically oral.

work of creation. This undivided spousal bond between the divine persons holds true even in its pious confession (τῇ εὐσεβεὶ ὁμολογίᾳ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,25–26). In the final part, Gregory emphatically concludes that he professes the unity of God's salvific actions:

For this reason also, he entrusts his own salvation to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He does not chop up the faith into a multitude of powers and deities, but believes in one power, one goodness, one life-giving power, one deity, one life.

Maced GNO III.I. 115,22–26

The human mind acquires clear knowledge: that God exists, but also that that which the human mind is seeking—knowledge of God's essence—is beyond all knowledge. Faith alone mediates between the subject and the object of the inquiry, and permits the probing mind to approach the incomprehensible nature. Faith alone can bring human beings to partake in the divine life. This faith, purged of every explicit notion, of all concepts and images of God, causes human beings to pursue God's glory for ever.

Gregory does not comment on the immanence of the Triune Godhead other than through reflecting on its acts, its ἐνέργειαι *ad extra* (creation and recreation). The Spirit, too, can be known only through his ἐνέργειαι as expressions of the undivided δύναμις of the Triune Godhead. Following the example of Paul's 1 Cor 1:24, where he calls Christ the power and wisdom of God, the key phrase of *Maced*, which presupposes a single divine nature for the three divine persons mentioned, describes God's δύναμις as follows:

Rather, the Father is the fount of power, the Son is the Father's power, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of power.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–3

The distinction within the one act of the divine persons lies not in what each divine person does, but in how each divine person acts: as the fount of the power, as the power, or as the spirit of the power. The Spirit is brought within the divine δύναμις, so that the Trinity's unity of action flows from the immanent connection between the three divine persons.

2 The Divinity of the Spirit and Humankind

2.1 *The Divinity of the Spirit*

The Spirit stands on the same level as the Father and the Son. He is on the divine side of the division, separated from creation by the *diastema*. Gregory responds to those who contend (οἱ ὑπερπαντίοι φασίν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,5) that the Spirit is not on the same level as the Father and the Son, but is at most an intermediate figure by formulating a profession of faith (ὁμολογούντων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,22): the Spirit is not an intermediate figure between the Creator(s) on the one hand and creation on the other. There is no other distinction between the Spirit on the one hand and the Father and the Son on the other, than that arising from the fact that the Spirit, who is from God and of Christ, must be considered in his own subsistence, according to his own individuality, on the basis of certain specific features:

For we confess that the Holy Spirit is ranked with the Father and the Son, since there is no divergence at all with respect to any of the names that are piously thought and named in connection with the divine nature, with the exception of what the Holy Spirit is specifically considered in reference to his subsistence, namely, that it is 'from God' (1 Cor 2:12; Jn 15:26) and 'of Christ' (Rom 8:9, cf. Gal 4:6), as it is written. It is confused neither with the Father in being unbegotten nor with the Son in being Only-Begotten. Rather, it is considered on its own by certain special distinguishing features, while in all other respects we confess, as I said, that it remains connected and indistinguishable.

Maced GNO III.I. 89,21–90,5

If he is divine, then all the divine names, all the lofty and transcendent concepts, such as holiness and simplicity, perfection and perfect goodness, apply. The Spirit *is* those attributes, not simply through participation in them. Not only Scripture and the Fathers, but reason, too, resists the idea that there is some intermediate position between the created and the uncreated. Ascribing a composite nature to the Spirit would mean that the Spirit was only a partaker of the divine attributes:

After all, reason recognizes no intermediary between them, such that it sup-poses between them there is some characteristic mark of a nature invented on the border of the created and the uncreated, as if partaking of both (ἀμφοτέρων μετέχειν) but being neither of the two completely.

Maced GNO III.I. 104,8–12

The basis for Gregory's conviction that the Spirit *is* the divine attributes, is the holiness of the Spirit as it is recorded in Scripture (Ps LXX 50:13, Is 63:10–11; several passages in the New Testament), a holiness that is proper to the Spirit by nature, as the Father and the Son are holy by nature. (*Maced GNO III.I. 108,18–20*).

To draw a sharp distinction between having attributes through participation and possessing these attributes on the basis of the Spirit's nature, Gregory uses (*Maced GNO III.I. 92,23–24*) nouns to designate the Spirit's divine attributes:

So then, if the form of its nature is simple, it does not possess goodness as something acquired. Rather, its essence, the very thing that it is, is goodness (ἀγαθότης), wisdom (σοφία), power (δύναμις), holiness (ἀγιασμός), justice (δικαιοσύνη), eternity (ἀϊδιότης), incorruptibility (ἀφθαρσία), and all the names that are lofty and transcendent.

Maced GNO III.I. 92,21–25

Because of his divine, i.e. simple, nature, the Spirit distributes gifts that he possesses by nature. Because of his divine nature, the Spirit provides all that is good, but does not himself require any addition or gift from any external source (ἀπροσδεὲς τῆς ἐτέρωθεν χάριτος, *Maced GNO III.I. 97,9–10*).

2.2 *The Place of the Spirit within the Inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία*

Gregory repeatedly stresses the indissoluble and ever-present mutual connection between Father, Son, and Spirit, indicated by *in connection with each other* (συνημμένως, *Maced GNO III.I. 98,29*), confirmed once again by *inseparably* (ἀχωρίστως, *Maced GNO III.I. 99,2*), a unity without interruption that precedes all time and all comprehension:

Before the entire creation, before all the ages, and before every conceivable idea, always the Father is Father, the Son is in the Father, and the Holy Spirit is with the Son.

Maced GNO III.I. 98,31–99,1

Within the Trinity, there is a distinction in person and sequence. Gregory distinguishes the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. He professes that:

It (sc. the Spirit) is confused neither with the Father in being unbegotten nor with the Son in being Only-Begotten. Rather, it is considered on its own by certain special distinguishing features.

Maced GNO III.I. 90,1–4

The Spirit has its individuality on the basis of certain specific characteristics (τισιν ἐξαίρετοις ιδιώμασιν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,3). Among these is the place of the Spirit within the sequence of the individual divine persons: the inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία, which can be deduced from the key phrase quoted above:

Rather, the Father is the fount of power, the Son is the Father's power, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of power.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–3

The Spirit is mentioned third in the sequence after the Father and the Son. This is a sequence handed down by tradition (τῇ τάξει τῆς παραδόσεως, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,22), as the baptismal command of Mt 28:19 shows.

In addition to the person, it is the fitting sequence, the ἀκολουθία, that distinguishes the three divine persons, without, however, detracting from the inseparable spousal bond (τὴν συνάφειαν, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,23; ἡ συνάφεια, *Maced* GNO III.I. 103,4–5) between the divine persons:

For this reason, apart from the difference in order and in subsistence, we comprehend no variation [among them] in any respect. Instead, while we maintain that it is numbered third in the sequence (τῇ ἀκολουθίᾳ) after Father and Son, and third in the order of the tradition, we confess its inseparable connection in all other respects: in nature, honor, deity, glory, majesty, omnipotence, and in the pious confession.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,19–26

The fitting sequence, in this case the inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία, is connected with Gregory's reflection on the birth of the Son and the procession of the Spirit from the Father. Here, too, the key phrase of the Spirit as the spirit of the Father's power, which is the Son, provides the context. Gregory proves that the three divine persons participate in the one divine nature, are separated from creation *diastemically*, and are therefore not dependent on the worship that human beings offer them, by pointing to the birth of the Son and the procession of the Spirit from the Father, the Son as born of the Father (τὸ μονογενὲς τῷ υἱῷ, *Maced* GNO III.I. 90,2), the Spirit as proceeding from the Father, while receiving from the Son (ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12–13). The first part of this passage is almost identical to the article on the Spirit in the creed of the Council of Constantinople in 381: τὸ ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον. As I will demonstrate in chapter 3, section 2.5, this faith perspective of Gregory's on the mutual connection between the divine persons, on the Father as the only cause, on the birth of the Son and the procession of

the Spirit from the Father, on the mutual relationship between the Spirit and the Father as the Father of the Son, and between the Spirit and the Son as the Son of the Father, leads to the *proprium* of the Holy Spirit: to receive the life that comes from the Father through the Son, and to transmit it to (baptised) human beings, so that the latter can accomplish their *reditus*. God's δύναμις in all its dynamism!

Gregory uses the statement ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον (*Maced GNO III.I. 97,12*) to clarify the position of the Spirit vis-à-vis the Father. Inspired by Paul's words in 1 Cor 2:12 (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ), and following the example of Jn 15:26 (τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας ὃ παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορεύεται), Gregory recognises the Father as the only cause who is itself without cause, the *proprium* of the Father. Following the example of Jn 16:14–15 (ἐκεῖνος ἐμὲ δοξάσει, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λήμψεται καὶ ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν. πάντα ὅσα ἔχει ὁ πατήρ ἐμὰ ἐστίν διὰ τοῦτο εἶπον ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λαμβάνει καὶ ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν), the addition ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον (*Maced GNO III.I. 97,12–13*) clarifies the relationship between the Son and the Spirit in their inseparable bond and their essential unity. Given the *procession* from the Father as sole principle, the Son has no causal relationship with the Spirit, but he mediates in transmitting that which comes from the Father to the Spirit as the third in the sequence of the Trinity, both *ad intra* and *ad extra*. The Son and the Spirit both have their sole cause in the person of the Father (not in his οὐσία!),⁴ they both have a *proprium* that distinguishes them from each other and from the Father. From an inner-Trinitarian perspective, the *proprium* of the Spirit is to receive the life that comes from the Father through the Son, and to transmit it, while the *proprium* of the Son is its mirror image: to receive the life that comes from the Father and to transmit it to the Spirit. The *propria* also serve to express the essential unity of the Son and the Spirit. Moreover, Gregory thus establishes that the Spirit is “without need of any external gift whatsoever” (ἀπροσδεὲς τῆς ἐτέρωθεν χάριτος, *Maced GNO III.I. 97,9–10*), i.e. from outside the Trinity. Inspired by Acts 10:38 (Ἰησοῦν τὸν ἀπὸ Ναζαρέθ, ὡς ἔχρισεν αὐτὸν ὁ θεὸς πνεύματι ἀγίῳ καὶ δυνάμει), Gregory figuratively expresses the intimate and mysterious connection between the Son and the Spirit in their relationship with the Father by comparing the Spirit, who is called the living, essential, and per-

4 The creed of Nicaea-Constantinople of 381 omitted the addition that accompanied the birth of the Son in the creed of Nicaea of 325: τουτέστιν ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ πατρὸς. ALCO MEESTERS, *God in drie woorden*, 110–111 (see also note 57 with other explanations for the omission of this addition), has plausibly contended that the 381 creed could no longer permit the notion that the οὐσία of the Father should be seen as the source of the Godhead. This is why the addition of 325 was deleted with good reason. The three divine persons together form an unmixed unity, a community that is the Triune Godhead.

sonified kingship (βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 102,27–28), to the royal anointing oil upon the body of the anointed one: the Father as king anoints the Son to be king and to be the anointed one, using the Spirit as the anointing oil.⁵ The Spirit is the anointing oil of the Only-Begotten One, the uncreated king by nature, and is thus included in the majesty of this king. The Spirit is therefore justly called not only kingship personified, but also glory personified. Again, what is visible in the history of salvation, the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit, is a reflection of what occurs in the Trinitarian immanence: the Father anoints the Spirit to be king with the royal anointing oil, the Spirit. The anointing oil is the inner-Trinitarian gift of the Spirit to the Son. Human beings who come to the Son in faith, will inevitably first encounter the Spirit on their way:

Accordingly, the one who would touch him by faith must first have contact with the ointment.

Maced GNO III.I. 103,5–6

2.3 *The Spirit Shares in Divine Glory*

The holiness of the Spirit, sign of his divinity and foundation of the divine attributes and divine activity that can be inferred from it, leads to possessing and receiving the divine glory, *and* to the conferring of glory, both upon the other divine persons and upon human beings, an intimate union between the Trinity *ad intra* and the Trinity *ad extra*. What is more, because the Spirit *is* divine glory personified, the Spirit is able to display the power to glorify:

In the same way, that which is not in itself glory, honor, greatness, and majesty will not display the power of glorifying. Now, the Spirit glorifies the Father and the Son.

Maced GNO III.I. 108,33–109,3

Gregory establishes the mutual glorification of the divine persons on the basis of scriptural passages (1Sam 2:30, Jn 17:4–5, and 12:28). It is evident from his addition of ἀπ' ἀρχῆς to the quotation from Jn 17:5: Δόξασόν με τῇ δόξῃ ἣ εἶχον ἀπ' ἀρχῆς παρὰ σοὶ πρὸ τοῦ τὸν κόσμον εἶναι (*Maced* GNO III.I. 109,5–6) that Gregory focuses on the immanence of the Trinity. Gregory describes the mutual glorification within the Trinity as a circle of divine glory, and compares it to the circular

5 For the specific way in which Gregory uses metaphors, see my commentary on *Maced* GNO III.I. 102,17–103,13. He blends image and the imagined thing into each other to indicate that there is no distance whatsoever between the Son and the Spirit.

revolution in the cosmos (ὁρᾷς τὴν ἐγκύκλιον τῆς δόξης διὰ τῶν ὁμοίων περιφορὰν; *Maced GNO III.I. 109,7–8*), with the dynamism as the *tertium comparationis*.

In relation to the divine glory, the fundamental, linear scheme of the Father as the fount of the power, the Son as the power of the Father, and the Holy Spirit as the spirit of the power (ἀλλὰ πηγὴ μὲν δυνάμεως ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ, δύναμις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, *Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–3*) functions within this dynamic circle of glory, in which each divine person is simultaneously the glory of the other. The straight line of the δύναμις and the circle of the δόξα act on each other. It is precisely by combining the straight line of the δύναμις and the circle of the δόξα that Gregory is able to circumvent the danger inherent in the key phrase about the Father being the fount of the power: the danger of opening the door to Plotinus's doctrine of emanation.

In this circle, each divine person has his own characteristic: the glory moves from the Father as its fount to the Son, who is the recipient and is connected with the Father. The Spirit stands in the centre as the glory personified which revolves and binds the Father and the Son together. In his turn, the Spirit receives everything that the Son has, and therefore everything that the Father has, as Jn 16:14–15 says:

ἐκεῖνος ἐμὲ δοξάσει, ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λήμψεται καὶ ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν. πάντα ὅσα ἔχει ὁ πατήρ ἐμὰ ἐστὶν· διὰ τοῦτο εἶπον ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λαμβάνει καὶ ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν.

This means that the term glory, like power, is a metaphysical term for divine unity, which can be characterised by the combination of unity and individuality. The undivided power and glory of the Triune Godhead become manifest in the dynamic circle of glory.

2.4 *The Spirit Shares in the Divine Power of Creation*

Given his holiness and the glory that can be inferred from it, the Spirit shares fully in the divine power of creation. He is “full of honour, full of glory, powerful according to his own nature” (τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα τῇ ἑαυτοῦ φύσει τίμιον, ἔνδοξον, δυνάτον, *Maced GNO III.I. 97,28–29*). The activity of the Spirit is an expression of the one divine δύναμις, in which the Spirit fully shares. The creation is the product of the activity of the one divine δύναμις:

the entire creation, as much of it as is sense-perceptible and as much of it as is incorporeal, is the product of the divine power.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,3–4

Within the divine power, there is unity of will and being. The creation begins from the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Holy Spirit:

Accordingly, someone might justly call the entire nature that came into being through creation a movement of will, an impulse of intention, and a transmission of power, which begins from the Father, proceeds through the Son, and is completed in the Holy Spirit.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,7–11

The inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία—the Father begets the Son; the Spirit proceeds from the Father (ἐκ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12) and receives from the Son who mediates (ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 97,12–13), and is therefore mentioned after the Father and the Son—becomes manifest in the ἀκολουθία according to which creation is called into being: beginning from the Father (ἐκ πατρὸς ἀρχομένην, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,9), proceeding through the mediation of the Son (δι' υἱοῦ προϊούσαν, GNO III.I. 100,10) and reaching completion in the Holy Spirit (ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ τελειουμένην, GNO III.I. 100,10). Gregory's argument for this position is simple and familiar (ιδιωτικῶς καὶ κατὰ τὸν συνήθη τρόπον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,12), and is based on the simple and pious belief in the authority of Paul's contention in 1 Cor 12:11: πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα διαιροῦν ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται.

The divine power of creation and its effects are part of the divine glory which the Spirit personifies. In the creation, the undivided power and the undivided glory of the Triune Godhead are made manifest. The Trinity's unity of action flows from the immanent connection between the three divine persons. The combination of the divine φύσις, δύναμις, ἐνέργειαί, ἔργα or θαύματα is a recurring feature in Gregory's texts. The works of God (ἔργα, θαύματα) are the results of God's activities (ἐνέργειαί), which witness to his might or power (δύναμις).⁶ This leads to the conclusion that the three divine person have one single nature (φύσις). Shared power presupposes a single nature, and shared activities also presuppose a single nature. Gregory introduces the Spirit into the one divine δύναμις in an original way, so that the Spirit shares fully in the single power of creation that belongs to God, who is Father, Son, and Spirit. He connects the two familiar concepts (one power means one nature in the

6 The intermediate step of God's δύναμις between God's ἐνέργειαί and God's φύσις is sometimes neglected: one example is the chapter on *The Trinity and the Classical Trinitarian Mould* in JOHN MCINTYRE, *The Shape of Pneumatology. Studies in the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*, Edinburgh 1997, 74–108. McIntyre underestimates the importance of God's δύναμις as the unity of God's activities (ἐνέργειαί).

case of the divinity of Father and Son on the one hand, and unity of action means one nature in the case of the divinity of the Father, Son, *and* Spirit on the other) with each other by calling the Father the fount of the power, the Son the power, and the Spirit the spirit of the power. In this way the divine power of creation accomplishes a single and shared act of creation. The three divine persons carry out this work equally with their one and shared power of creation.

2.5 *The Spirit Gives Divine Life*

The creation is followed by the new creation: the objective of salvation history is the recreation of humankind. The Spirit's inner-Trinitarian *proprium*, to receive the life that comes from the Father through the Son, and to transmit it, continues outside the Trinity: in the creation and recreation of humankind: the life that the Spirit has received is transmitted by the Spirit to creation. Given his divinity and his inner-Trinitarian gift to the Son of the royal anointing, as spirit of the power that is the Son, the Spirit, from his own possessions, distributes to creation the gifts *ad extra*, gifts that he possesses by nature. The holiness of the Spirit (κατὰ φύσιν ἅγιος, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,19*) expresses itself first and foremost in his life-creating power (κατὰ τὸ ζωοποιόν, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,21*). The Spirit gives all good things, and before all else, life itself (ἀγαθῶν πάντων παραεκτικὸν καὶ πρό γε ἀπάντων αὐτῆς τῆς ζωῆς, *Maced GNO III.I. 108,23–24*). Gregory substantivises the power to bring about all that is good, and he uses it as one of the names of the Spirit, referring to Paul's 1 Cor 12:11 (πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα διαιροῦν ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται):

τὸ ἄρχον καὶ τὸ κυριεύον καὶ τὸ ἐξουσιάζον καὶ τὸ πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἐνεργοῦν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει

Maced GNO III.I. 114,7–9

The Spirit has the power (δυναστεύει, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,13*) and receives the qualifying addition τὸ πάντα ἐνεργοῦν ἐν πᾶσιν (*Maced GNO III.I. 113,13–14*). This is the power to give the divine gift of life as beneficent donor (εὐεργετεῖ δὲ ζωὴν χαριζόμενον, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,15*), even to distribute (τὸ κατ' ἐξουσίαν διαιροῦν τὰ χαρίσματα καθὼς βούλεται, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,14–15*) all divine gifts of grace (τὰ χαρίσματα).

These good gifts that the Spirit gives to creation culminate in the gift that envisages the recreation of the human being: baptism, the gift of grace that gives its recipient a share in the life that is no longer subject to death (τὸ ζωῆς μετέχειν οὐκ ἐτι θανάτῳ ὑποκειμένης, *Maced GNO III.I. 105,20–21*) and leads to the recreation of the human being.

Here too, in the case of the life-creating force of the baptismal water, the key phrase of *Maced* is at work: the Father is the fount of the divine power of recreation, while the Son personifies the power of the Father, and the Spirit is the spirit of the power. The life-creating gift that comes from the Father as from a life-giving fount, proceeds through the Son who is the true life, and reaches completion for those who have been deemed worthy through the activity of the Spirit. The inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία becomes manifest here as the soteriological ἀκολουθία, that fitting sequence that has been handed down to us by tradition (τῇ τάξει τῆς παραδόσεως, *Maced* GNO III.I. 100,22) and that can be heard in the baptismal command of Mt 28:19. This order in Mt 28:19 is fundamental for the way in which salvation comes to human beings, in the linear sequence of Father>Son>Spirit:

from him (sc the Father) the life-giving grace originates, gushing forth with life as if from a spring through the Only-Begotten Son, who is the true life, and is made complete in those who are worthy by the activity of the Spirit (τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ τοῦ πνεύματος ἁγίου).

Maced GNO III.I. 106,5–8

The activity of the Spirit is an expression of the undivided divine δύναμις in which the Spirit fully partakes. The Spirit is the Giver of life of those who receive baptism, he sanctifies the baptismal water, a consecration which transforms the water:

Rather, it is clear to everyone that this is used to minister to the body, though it contributes nothing of its own to sanctification unless it has been transformed by consecration.

Maced GNO III.I. 105,24–27

It is the Spirit who, participating in the one divine life-giving power, brings the recipients of baptism to life (τὸ δὲ ζωοποιοῦν τοὺς βαπτιζομένους τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι, *Maced* GNO III.I. 105,27–28), as Jn 6:63 teaches Gregory: Τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστὶ τὸ ζωοποιοῦν (*Maced* GNO III.I. 105,29–30). This is the title that the Constantinopolitan Creed gave to the Spirit. The external ceremony of baptism is the visible sign of the activity of God's invisible power. The orthodox faith is not limited in its observance to correct doctrines, but also—and primarily—includes participation in the sacraments, in baptism in this case, which receive their efficacy from the invocation of the three divine persons.

The life-creating power of the Spirit is none other than that of the Son and the Father (εἰς μίαν δύναμιν, μίαν ἀγαθότητα, μίαν ζωοποιὸν ἐξουσίαν, μίαν θεό-

τητα, μίαν ζωὴν πιστεύων, Maced GNO III.I. 115,24–26). It is precisely the life-creating power through which Father, Son, and Spirit manifest the unity of their nature. This is how Gregory in his own way translates what the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed professes about the Son as true God from true God. God is Life itself.⁷ This life, which also means this life liberated from death, springs, as from a fount, from the Father to the Son, and through the mediation of the Son and due to the activity of the Spirit, it flows as a life-giving gift to humankind. For Gregory, the power of God is a description of Life. The Spirit as the spirit of the power is the One who gives this life to human beings. The Father brings forth the Son, begets the Son from eternity. God's life brings forth divine life, which the Son receives in fullness and which he transmits to the Spirit, who comes to human beings as gift of self.

2.6 *The Spirit Draws Humankind into the Glory of the Trinity*

It is the Son who, from the Father, goes to humankind and bestows the Spirit upon it: the *exitus* of the Son. This *exitus* of the Son also makes possible the *reditus* of human beings, who come in the Spirit to the Son, who brings them to the Father. The inner life of the Trinity, human understanding of this, and the entry of human beings into the divine life of the Trinity are all connected. The Spirit given by the incarnate Son sets in motion the *reditus* that human beings effect through the Son to the Father, an upward movement (ἀνελθεῖν, Maced GNO III.I. 98,26). This is where the inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία of Father, Son, and Spirit finds its soteriological continuation. The key phrase of the power is also at work here. Human beings come to the Son thanks to the Spirit. It is in the Spirit, as the spirit of the power that is the Son, that human beings can call Jesus the Lord:

For just as it is impossible to rise up to the Father unless one is lifted up through the Son, so too one 'cannot say Lord Jesus except in the Holy Spirit'.

Maced GNO III.I. 98,26–28

It is the Spirit who brings human beings to Christ as the Son whose power refers to the fount of this power, his Father as the source of life. The Spirit shows mercy as redeemer (ἐλεεῖ λυτρούμενον, Maced GNO III.I. 113,15–16). Yes, the Spirit deifies, and he does this by leading people to God (θεοποιεῖ θεῶ προσάγον, Maced GNO III.I. 113, 16). Gregory explains what this means thus: the Spirit

⁷ Eun III GNO II. 212,15: ἡ μὲν θεότης αὐτοζωή ἐστι.

adopts (υἱοθετεῖ, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,16*) a human being by connecting him or her with Christ (Χριστῷ προσοικειοῦν, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,16–17*). This adoption is accomplished by the Spirit's gift of the kingship (βασιλείαν δωρούμενον, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,17*), the kingship that belongs of all eternity to the Father and the Son. In doing so, the Spirit, who is the living, essential, and personified kingship (βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος, *Maced GNO III.I. 102,27–28*), gives himself as a gift. The distance that separates humankind and the Son is bridged by the Spirit's gift of self. The Spirit is the anointing oil used to anoint the Only-Begotten One to be the anointed one and the king of all that is:

The notion (ἔννοια) of anointing intimates through riddles (δι' ἀπορρήτων αἰνίσσεται) that there is no gap between the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Maced GNO III.I. 102,31–103,1

Professing the Son as the Christ, i.e. as the Anointed One, presupposes that the person who makes this profession acknowledges the inseparable bond between the anointed one and the anointing oil, i.e. between Christ and the Spirit. By professing the Son as the Christ and by receiving the Spirit, i.e. the anointing oil and the kingship, the baptised person bears the name of Christian, the anointed one. By giving himself to a human being in baptism, as kingship and anointing oil, the Spirit binds this person to Christ and adopts the person as son of God, as royal son. It is in this way that the Spirit brings human beings to God. Given this gift of self by the Spirit, the Spirit brings the dead to life (τὸ νεκρὸν ἀνίστησιν, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,17*), and leads the dead to the resurrection (τὸν ἀποθανόντα εἰς ἀνάστασιν ἄγει, *Maced GNO III.I. 113,19–20*), which is a variation on the important title of the Spirit in the Constantinopolitan Creed of 381: as ζωοποιόν.

The *reditus*, which is an *anabasis*, proceeds from the Spirit through the Son to the Father, from whom the *exitus* began. Ultimately, it transpires that the *exitus/reditus* and the circle of glorification are intimately linked. They are linked in such a way that the human *reditus* to the Father is continued in the sharing of human beings in the mutual, dynamic glorification of the Trinity. The bond that the Spirit establishes between the human being and the Triune Godhead is akin to the bond of matrimony (πῶς γάρ τις προσκολληθήσεται τῷ κυρίῳ μὴ τοῦ πνεύματος τὴν συνάφειαν ἡμῶν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐνεργούντος; *Maced GNO III.I. 109, 21–23*), and is equated with the spousal bond that exists between the divine persons (ἀχώριστον τὴν συνάφειαν ὁμολογούντες, *Maced GNO III.I. 100,23–24*) and between the Spirit and the Son (οὕτως ἀδιάστατός ἐστι πρὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τῷ υἱῷ ἢ συνάφεια, *Maced GNO III.I. 103,4–5*).

3 The Spirit, Like the Father and the Son, Is Deserving of Adoration

Given the divinity and the perfection of the Spirit, his honour and dignity are equal to that of the Father and the Son, and his fullness of honour, like that of the Father and the Son, is immutable and independent of human worship.

The Spirit may not depend upon human worship, but is nonetheless deserving of human adoration, like the Father and the Son are deserving of it, because, as one of the three divine persons, he is the giver of life, of all that is good in creation, and because he is the Lord who governs, who holds power and who is the ruler:

what does this new legislation [sc. of the Pneumatomachians] mean? I cannot see why they do not make a request of the giver, nor bow to the one who governs, nor serve the one who holds power, nor worship the ruler. After all, no one is so estranged from himself and from the Spirit that he would not agree with the claim that all these names are observed in connection with the Holy Spirit. For the one that by nature is ‘ruler’ rules, the one that ‘produces all things in all’ holds power, and the one that authoritatively ‘distributes the gifts as it wishes’ possesses authority. It benefits us by giving us life. It shows us mercy by redeeming us. It makes us gods by bringing us to God. It adopts us by bringing us into affinity with Christ and giving us the kingdom. It raises the dead, lifts up the fallen, and sets the wanderer on the right path. It keeps the one standing firm steadfast; it brings the one who has died to the resurrection.

Maced GNO III.I. 113,8–20

This hymnic utterance of praise and its confirmation in the substantivised titles of the Spirit (τὸ ἄρχον καὶ τὸ κυριεύον καὶ τὸ ἐξουσιάζον καὶ τὸ πάντα τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἐνεργοῦν ἐν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει, *Maced GNO III.I. 114,7–9*), titles which point to the Spirit as ruler on the one hand, and as the giver of life, of all that is good in creation on the other, put flesh on the bones of the two terms that in the creed of Constantinople of 381 precede the affirmation that the Holy Spirit, together with the Father and the Son, is worshipped and glorified (τὸ σὺν πατρὶ καὶ υἱῷ συμπροσκυνούμενον καὶ συνδοξαζόμενον): he is the Lord and the giver of life (τὸ κύριον καὶ τὸ ζωοποιόν).

The Trinitarian Theology of Adoration

1 Human Beings Cannot Add Anything to the Honour of the Triune Godhead

The fullness of honour that belongs to God, to the divine nature, and therefore also to the divine persons, does not depend on the honour that human beings give to God. Given the fact that God is perfect, God's fullness of honour is not capable of being either augmented or diminished. In view of the divine nature of the Spirit, his perfection, his essential characteristics, which do not depend on their attribution to him by human beings, human beings cannot add anything to the honour of the Spirit, any more than they can add anything to the honour of the Father and to that of the Son.

2 God's Power Sets People on Their Way to God. Human Beings' Free Gratitude Is Their Response

It is nonetheless fitting that human beings should adore God and honour him. The connection between God and humankind is established through God's power. Human beings, with their feeble power, are taken up into God's Trinitarian life through God's life-giving power in baptism. This inclusion in the Trinitarian life gives human beings the desire to adore God in gratitude. In their attempt to praise God and to adore him, human beings have only their human freedom, their ability to choose; this is their only possible response to God's greatness, to his beatific power that is always far removed from all human striving, from all human impulses. The Triune Godhead receives honour, glory, and adoration in the form of the free gratitude of human beings for their redemption, which comes to them from the three divine persons. Gregory describes human freedom not as the power of human beings, as he occasionally does in his other writings, (προαιρετική δύναμις), but he limits himself in *Maced* to the term προαίρεσις.

3 Acknowledgement of the Spirit's *homotimia* Is Required for True Adoration

Following Jn 4:23 (οἱ ἀληθινοὶ προσκυνηταὶ προσκυνήσουσιν τῷ πατρὶ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ ἀληθείᾳ), Gregory draws a fundamental distinction between true adoration and false adoration. Belief in the full divinity of the Spirit, and thus acknowledgement of the Spirit's *homotimia*, precedes the accurate understanding of Scripture and is therefore a precondition for worshiping God in truth. False adorers deny the familiar profession of faith, because they except the Spirit from the adoration of God, and their denial of the divine glory of the Spirit leads to the denial of the glory of the Son. For it is only in the Spirit, as Paul says in 1 Cor 12:3, that human beings can say: Jesus is the Lord. In the only passage in *Maced* where Gregory uses the word προσκυνητής, worshiper (ὁ ἀληθινὸς προσκυνητής, *Maced* GNO III.I. 114,5–6), he characterises the true worshiper as one who adores the Spirit. In the adoration of the Spirit, the Christian who honours the Christian teachings, worships the Father through the Son, and respects the sequence of the baptismal command by beginning with the Father, by including the Son with the Father, and by refusing to separate the Holy Spirit from the Only-Begotten One. The acknowledgement of the divinity of the Spirit is essential to making an orthodox profession of faith and to its corollary of receiving baptism. By worshiping in this way, human beings turn away from the physical, earthly lowness of thoughts (the thought for instance that the Spirit is a creature, or some intermediate figure between the Creator and the creatures), and complete their return, their *reditus* to God (*Maced* GNO III.I. 114,6–7).

4 Human Beings Give God All Possible Honour by Offering Him Their προαίρεσις

Like the poor widow in Mk 12:41–44/Lk 21:1–4, who put everything she possessed in the treasury, true worshipers offer God all the honour they are capable of. In their feebleness, they offer all they have: their free will, their freedom to choose independently, their προαίρεσις. This freedom of choice, which is a gift from God, is human beings' *proprium*, their highest honour. In their προαίρεσις, they are the image and likeness of God. By offering their free will, human beings are able to praise and thank God in their *reditus* for the life that they have received. This freedom of choice has been perverted as a result of the Fall, and it is no longer oriented to its innate end, the natural longing for God, focusing instead on what appears good. In baptism, the fruit of Christ's incarnation, suffering, death and resurrection, free will, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit,

regains the ability to see what is truly good and to orient human longing once again to what is truly good, to God, and to the corresponding end of human beings, their τέλος. Thus the human likeness to God's image is restored, human beings' true human nature. By offering their προάψεις, something made possible by the Trinity who has the power of salvation, human beings do everything that is in their power:

Rather, he will dedicate to the God above all things everything in his own capacity that would seem to be greater and transcendent, continually offering up all the honor, glory, and worship in his capacity to the one who holds the power of salvation. Now, the Father saves, as does the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Maced GNO III.1. 115,17–22

In this condition, the human προάψεις resembles the divine προάψεις; thus the human προάψεις is the reflection of God's power. The human προάψεις is the personification, the hypostatisation of human nature, and it has a creative force. The human soul is like a living mirror in which the human soul, endowed with free will, can reflect God's light, the light of the Holy Spirit. The glory that we render to God consists of offering our good will and the concomitant good deeds, which have their source in God, who gives us the power and the glory to be virtuous. We offer up our good will to God as a hymn of praise to him and as a sign of our gratitude, having been equipped to do this by the power of the Son and the Spirit as the spirit of that power. The offering up of our own limited power, our προάψεις, as a hymn of praise and as a gift to God, functions within the context of God's *exitus* and our *reditus*, taken by the hand by God. By offering up our προάψεις, our *reditus* to God is completed: the *oikonomia* of glory. The immeasurable distance between God's inaccessible and indescribable nature and feeble human beings with their feeble attempts at praise and worship leads Gregory to refrain from describing human freedom of choice as the *power* of human beings, but to limit himself to the term προάψεις, the simple and humble—in fact the only—response that human beings have to offer in their attempt to praise and worship God. God's immeasurable power is met by human being's limited power. Human beings in all their weakness are dependent on God's omnipotence.

5 The True Adoration of God Is Inclusion in the Life of the Triune Godhead

As they acknowledge their weakness, human beings dedicate themselves to the worship of the divine nature; without reserve and without distinction, they offer up to God all that appears to be greater and higher in their capacity, that is: their God-oriented προαίρεσις. Human limitation, the joint redemptive action of the three divine persons in which the unity of Triune Godhead is manifest, belief in the full divinity of all three divine persons, and the human hymn of praise to this Triune Godhead are joined together within human beings who make their *reditus* to God even while still on earth, proleptically. This means that they go to the Father through the Son in the Spirit, that they have been found worthy of the divine epiphany, and in this condition can do nothing but sing praises and offer thanks, starting with the Father and including the Son with the Father, without separating the Spirit from the Son. In the *reditus* to God that human beings make, they raise up to God all that their feeble human capability, their human δύναμις, permits them to offer in honour and glory and adoration. Thus they are drawn into the divine life of the Triune Godhead. Human beings will offer up their gratitude for the salvation that has come forth from the three, for their own lives, and will begin with the source, the Father, including the Son with the Father, without separating the Holy Spirit from the Only-Begotten One. This gratitude gives honour, glory and adoration to the three divine persons. The connection between God and human beings is established due to God's power; human beings are included in the divine life of the Triune Godhead thanks to the Father as the source of the power, thanks to the Son as the power, and thanks to the Spirit as the spirit of the power.

In this way, he will offer up thanksgiving for his own life, starting with the Father, grasping the Son along with the Father, and not separating the Spirit from the Only-Begotten. Thus he will render to the God above all with the Only-Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit honor, glory, and worship unto endless ages. Amen.

Maced GNO III.I. 115,26–32

From Speaking by God through Speaking about God to Worship of the Triune Godhead

1 Theo-logia as Speaking by God

In this chapter, I will distinguish between *oikonomia* and *theologia* in the following way: *theologia* and *oikonomia* are two ways of speaking about the Trinity.¹ *Theologia* approaches the mystery of God, *oikonomia* discovers the traces of God's all-encompassing plan from creation to universal fulfilment, a plan in which God and all his creatures are predestined to live in the mystery of love and mutual solidarity.² Holy Scripture provides stories, events, and human experiences that are the result of speaking by God, *theo-logia*, as it can be found in the same Holy Scripture, God's self-revelation. This speaking by God, and the human experiences based on it as they are articulated in Holy Scripture, enable us to acquire some form of understanding of the mystery of God, *theo-logia* as the manner of speaking about the Trinity in terms of God's mystery. In the light of the insight obtained through *theologia*, the approach of *oikonomia* affirms the connection between God's mystery of the Trinity and God's plan of salvation for his creation.

The result of this speaking *by* God is that we are able to speak *about* God as a theological activity. Through this theological activity, our thinking and speaking about God's self-revelation in the person of Christ and in the person of the Holy Spirit, we attain some conception of the Trinity *ad intra*, as the result of this thinking and speaking, and we subsequently affirm the connection that we discern between the mystery of the divine Trinity and God's plan of salvation for his creation. For Gregory, this affirmation leads unconditionally to human beings' doxological speaking *to* God: praising Him and worshipping Him.

1 I follow in the footsteps here of DAVID COFFEY, *Deus Trinitas. The Doctrine of the Triune God*, Oxford 1999, 16–19, who in turn was inspired by BERNARD LONERGAN, *Insight. A Study of Human Understanding. Collected Works vol. 3*, Toronto 1992, 381 (with his triad of *experience, understanding, judgment*); HERWI RIKHOF, The Current Renaissance of the Theology of the Trinity—a Reconstruction, in: *Bijdragen, International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 70 (2009) 423–457, pp. 441–442.

2 See CATHERINE MOWRY LACUGNA, *God for Us. The Trinity and Christian Life*, San Francisco, 1991, 223.

In his introduction to his opponents' accusation of godlessness on account of his acknowledgement of the divine nature of the Spirit, Gregory begins by bringing the testimony of Scripture about the Holy Spirit to bear. He regards himself as a disciple of the teaching of the Scriptures (μεμαθήκαμεν, *Maced GNO III.I.* 90,23; τῆς τῶν γραφῶν διδασκαλίας, *Maced GNO III.I.* 90,29), who is thus obedient to the baptismal command of Mt 28:19, and is therefore able to become a teacher himself. It is on these grounds that Gregory continues his explanation of God's speaking. Scripture is divine, it is of God (θείας γραφῆς, *Maced GNO III.I.* 90,21); it is described by way of variation in *Maced GNO III.I.* 90,24 as "the utterances inspired by God" (ταῖς θεοπνεύστοις φωναῖς). This witness has taught Gregory that the Holy Spirit is divine and is called such. In *Maced GNO III.I.* 93,12–14, Gregory specifically focuses the theme of speaking by God on the baptismal command of Mt 28:19; it was God's voice itself that placed the Holy Spirit third in the sequence:

what sort of wisdom lies in their consideration that, for the same reason—namely, that it is numbered after Father and Son by the divine voice—it is pious to deny the dignity of the Holy Spirit?

Baptism reveals the life-giving aspect of the Spirit. To show this, Gregory quotes the Lord himself in Jn 6:63: Τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστὶ τὸ ζωοποιοῦν (*Maced GNO III.I.* 105,29–30). This requires faith in the Son, who refers to the Father as the source of life. In *Maced GNO III.I.* 106,5–8, the life-creating gift that comes from the Father proceeds through the Son and is fulfilled through the Spirit's ἐνέργεια. It is a linear configuration of Father>Son>Spirit:

from him (sc the Father) the life-giving grace originates, gushing forth with life as if from a spring through the Only-Begotten Son, who is the true life, and is made complete in those who are worthy by the activity of the Spirit (τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ τοῦ πνεύματος ἁγίου).

Maced's key phrase about God's power also affects Gregory's vision on speaking by God. On the authority of the Father, the Son pronounces that it is the Spirit who gives life; such is the testimony of the Scriptures that come from God.

The linear configuration of Father>Son>Spirit is complemented by the circle of glorification. It transpires that the linearity of the power that was described before is in fact a circularity of dynamism, the dynamic circle of glory. Once again, Gregory quotes the Lord (Jn 17:4–5), and subsequently also the Father (Jn 12:28):

Now, the Spirit glorifies the Father and the Son. Moreover, he who said (1Sam 2:30) ‘those who glorify me, I will glorify’ does not lie. ‘I have glorified you’, the Lord says to the Father (Jn 17:4). And again, ‘Glorify me with the glory that I had from the beginning from you, before the world began’ (Jn 17:5). The divine voice answers (Jn 12:28), ‘Indeed, I have glorified and will again glorify’.

Maced GNO III.I. 109,2–7

God’s speaking, as it resonates in Scripture, is an expression of God’s loving power that stands at the service of humankind; this speaking by God is an expression of his *exitus* for the sake of human beings, and it sets in motion their *reditus*. God shows his longing for human beings; the Father is both the source and the ultimate object of the divine longing within us.³ The incarnation of the Word is the crowning moment of the *theo-logia*. Human beings acquire knowledge of the dynamic circle of divine glory thanks to the utterances of the incarnate Word; they are drawn into the circle of divine glory thanks to the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, thanks to his life-giving power, and to the spirit of the power, which is the Spirit. This speaking by God resonates not only in the Scriptures, but also in the words of the baptismal formula. It is thanks to Christ’s life, death, and resurrection, thanks to the life-giving power and its spirit, which is the Spirit, that the words of the baptismal formula have *performative* force. Water is used in baptism so that it can be visibly administered to the body. The sanctification that baptism effects takes place only if the baptismal water is transformed through consecration: εἰ μὴ μεταποιηθῇ διὰ τοῦ ἀγιάσματος (*Maced* GNO III.I. 105,27). This requires the life-creating Spirit, who is invoked upon the water, together with the baptizand’s belief in the Spirit *and* the Son *and* the Father, in whose name baptism is administered. In baptism, the Spirit becomes present in an ineffable way, thanks to his invocation, his blessing, and his consecration of the water. The coming of the Spirit transcends human understanding. The ineffable nature of this sacramental event is its apophatic dimension. But this apophasis is transcended by the statement

3 SARAH COAKLEY, *The New Ascetism. Sexuality, Gender and the Quest for God*, London 2015, in her chapter *Living into the Mystery of the Holy Trinity: The Trinity, Prayer and Sexuality*, 85–100, pp. 87–91: given her quest for (p. 87) “a renewed vision of divine desire (a trinitarian vision, I suggest) which may provide the guiding framework for a renewed theology of human sexuality—of godly sexual relations—rooted in, and in some sense analogously related to, Trinitarian divine relations”, she regards Paul’s analysis of prayer in Rom 8:26 (“And as well as this, the Spirit too comes to help us in our weakness, for, when we do not know how to pray properly, then the Spirit personally makes our petitions for us in groans that cannot be put into words”, NJB) as crucially important.

that the baptised person is drawn into the Triune life. This apophasis has its positive side in the imitation of Christ as the Image of God. For human beings as images of the Image, this imitation is the only way to reach God in his Trinitarian life. Thus human beings become speakers of the Word, or rather, the Word becomes a speaker within the human beings in whom he dwells.⁴ But this imitation can only happen in the Holy Spirit. Thus in the language that is effective in baptism, we again see the *exitus* and the *reditus*: the Father shows his benevolence to human beings who have fallen in sin in the incarnate Word, who, in his own baptism, draws down the Spirit upon the water. In the blessing of the priest who is the Word that speaks, the Spirit comes upon the baptismal water, which is thus given its efficaciousness for each human being who converts to Christ. In baptism, the baptised person as the image of the Image of God enters into the imitation of Christ, and through the indwelling of the Word becomes a speaker of the Word. Thus the baptised become participants in the intimate life of the Trinity and come to the heart of the Father. They share in the circle of glory. They will become what the Holy Spirit is and what he is called, the glory of God. A clear connection is in evidence here between the spiritual life of human beings and their sacramental life.⁵

2 Theology as Speaking about God

How does Gregory regard his task as bishop-theologian, just in his role of *arbiter fidei*, in expounding his pneumatology? How does Gregory connect the language he uses in his teaching about the divinity of the Spirit with the language that is used during the administration of baptism, based on God's speaking?

His point of departure is Scripture, which he reads in obedience to the teachings of the Fathers, which lead to the familiar profession of faith and his teaching about this. His reading and interpretation of Scripture in compliance with the teachings of the Fathers lead to a form of understanding of the mystery of God, the *theologia*.⁶ In his teaching, he demonstrates the connection between his insight—acquired in faith—into God's mystery, the *theologia*, with his view

4 MARTIN LAIRD, *Gregorius of Nyssa and the Grasp of Faith—Union, Knowledge and Divine Presence*, Oxford 2004, 154–173, speaks in this case of λογόφασις. On p. 155 he describes *logo-phasis* “as a fruit of apophatic Union with the Word (logos), the Word expresses (phasis) itself through the deeds and discourse of the one whom the Word indwells.”

5 JEAN DANÉLOU points to this intimate connection in his book *Platonisme*, 23–35.

6 In *Vit Moys*, Gregory likens theology to Mount Sinai: Moses ascends to listen to God's revelation, and descends Sinai to teach his people what he has heard (GNO VIII.1. 84,21 ff.).

on God's plan of salvation for his creation, the *oikonomia*, a view he attained through the *theologia*. Gregory does not limit himself in his teaching to the testimony of Scripture. It transpires that in his teaching in *Maced*, Gregory makes ample use of appeals to his readers' common sense; he speaks of the common notions. In doing so he uses the full range of his rhetorical skills: not just in relation to content, but also to form, Gregory's aim is to teach in such a way as to produce an anagogical effect. A good example is his hymnic praise of the Spirit in *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,8–20, where he uses the carefully constructed rhetorical form of a double chiasm (*chiasmus maior*: *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,8–20; *chiasmus minor*: *Maced* GNO III.I. 113,9–14). In fact, the entire structure of the work is chiasitic: from the Spirit's reigning with God, through the divine gift—of life before all else—to the salvific work of the Spirit who raises the dead person to life, who brings them to new life with God.

Gregory's teaching on the divinity of the Spirit as a bishop-theologian leads to his exposition on baptism. In his letter to Heracleianus (*Epist* XXIV), Gregory clearly links the baptismal command of Mt 28:19 with the Christian way of life. This Christian way of life is distinct in two respects: because it finds the truth in the reliability of the dogmas and because it finds virtue of life in obeying God's commandments. Thus Gregory deduces a division of the Christian way of life from the baptismal command. The reliability of the doctrines lies in the tradition of baptism, while the virtue of Christian life lies in obedience to Christ's commandments. It was, after all, part of Christ's baptismal command that his disciples should teach the baptizands to keep Christ's commandments. This division gives rise to a mission for the theologian, including here in *Maced*: to hold together the accuracy of doctrine, the truth, and virtue of life. The bishop-theologian's task is to describe God's ordered salvific actions that are visible in creation and in his redemptive work in Christ in such a way, that the order of words is compatible with the subject at hand *and* with the genre in question, which in *Maced* is that of a circular letter by an *arbiter fidei* containing a counteraccusation. Specifically, Gregory sets himself the task as a good rhetor of finding the right subject and fitting words, in this case words fitting to a circular letter. Fitting also means that the order of the thoughts and the words chosen to express this must inspire the audience, must have an anagogical effect on the way towards perfect understanding of the faith, which, as has been seen, has two dimensions: the accuracy of doctrine and the perfection of life.

Gregory announces his position at the very start of *Maced*: his speaking about God serves to correct erroneous insights: ἐπὶ διορθώσει τῶν μοχθηρῶν ὑπολήψεων (*Maced* GNO III.I. 89,10). He adds that he will introduce nothing new himself, nor anything he has invented himself. All he will do is take

the testimony of Scripture about the Holy Spirit, which teaches that the Holy Spirit is divine and is called so:

We will answer with nothing new, nothing of our own making, to those who summon us to do such things. Rather, we will make use of the testimony of the divine scripture concerning the Holy Spirit, through which we have learned that the Holy Spirit is divine and is called so.

Maced GNO III.I. 90,19–23

Gregory complements the teaching of Scripture with the common notions: τῶν κοινῶν ἐννοιῶν (*Maced GNO III.I. 90,29–30*). He sees no contradiction between what Scripture teaches and what the common notions show about the Spirit in relation to the divine nature. In what follows, in what he calls his study (τοῖς ἐξητασμένοις, *Maced GNO III.I. 95,9–10*), Gregory extensively demonstrates the concordance between what Scripture teaches and what the common notions can show. When Gregory comes to the key phrase about God's power (*Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–3*), having demonstrated the essential relationship between God's power and the creation, he qualifies his own contribution to this statement, despite the sophistries of his opponents. He concludes that his portrayal is the fruit of the simplicity of his pious thinking in his customary manner (Ταῦτα ἡμεῖς ἰδιωτικῶς καὶ κατὰ τὸν συνήθη τρόπον ἡμῖν ἐννοοῦντες, *Maced GNO III.I. 100,12–13*). He says this notwithstanding the fact that his important and core claim about God's δύναμις and the way he develops this are decidedly original.

Once again, Gregory manifests his awareness of his own limits when it comes to speaking fittingly about God, in this case about the Spirit: every height of human capacity will remain far below the greatness of Him who is adored:

Whenever you reach the height of human capacity, to concepts of the loftiest height and greatest magnitude that the human mind can attain, then you must consider them to be below the surpassing dignity, as is said in the Psalm, after 'exalting the Lord our God', even then you barely 'worship the footstool under his feet' (Ps LXX 98:5). The reason his dignity is inconceivable, it says, is nothing other than 'because he is holy'.

Maced GNO III.I. 107,21–28

The passages that follow in *Maced* once again demonstrate the connection between Gregory's belief in the Triune Godhead and the place of the Spirit therein on the one hand, and the common sense, the common notions on the other. On the basis of the familiar profession of faith, Gregory repeatedly

appeals to common sense, the logical arguments of his opponents, *and* he accuses them of being blinded by *hubris* when they resist the divinity and majesty of the Spirit, thus becoming enemies of their own life. For they deny the Spirit, the giver of all bounty—including life—, their supplications and their praise, because they believe in their wicked error that the Spirit is not deserving of adoration. The Spirit is deserving of thanks; the only gift human beings can offer is their free will:

But the only gift human nature offers is its freedom of choice, rendering the homage that it intends to give only by willing it. It has no capacity beyond its will and its intentional impulse and movement.

Maced GNO III.I. 114,18–21

The bishop-theologian, as is his custom, immediately continues by qualifying human capability. Human beings do not praise the divine and unknowable nature, but only something that is considered in connection with it:

Even if it (sc. the human nature) chose to express its awe, even if it extols the magnificence of the divine power with particular praises, it did not praise the nature. Indeed, how will it praise what it does not know? Rather, it glorified one of the ideas considered in connection with it.

Maced GNO III.I. 114,21–24

Gregory has a deep and apophatic awareness of his own limits when he speaks about God:

But that divine and blessed power itself, just as it is, remains unattainable and imperceptible to thoughts. The curiosity of the mind, the power of reason, the movement of the heart, and the impulse of reflection: all these that divine and blessed power rejects as inferior to itself to a much greater degree than our bodies fall short of touching the stars.

Maced GNO III.I. 114,31–115,4

For Gregory, apophatic speaking about God leads irrevocably to adoration and praise of the Triune Godhead, who has the power to save. In this adoration, human beings profess their faith in God's one power, God's one *δύναμις*:

For this reason also, he (sc. man) entrusts his own salvation to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He does not chop up the faith into a multitude of

powers and deities, but believes in one power, one goodness, one life-giving power, one deity, one life.

Maced GNO III.I. 115,22–26

Gregory draws a close connection between engaging in theology and his submission to the Scriptures and to the corresponding doctrines of the Fathers. The central feature here is his faithful belief, based on Scripture and on the teachings of the Fathers, that the Spirit belongs fully to the Triune Godhead and prompts him to speak apophatically about the Triune Godhead:

But if he at all professes to be an ambassador of Christian concerns, it is certain that, when he conceives of ‘Father’, he has also conceived of him whose Father he is, and when he has taken up the notion of ‘Son’, he has first been enlightened through the Spirit. For ‘no one can say *Jesus is Lord* except in the Holy Spirit’ (1 Cor 12:3).

Maced GNO III.I. 114,1–5

In his theological speaking about God, Gregory permits himself to be guided in the composition of his circular letter by the three ἀκολουθίαι: the inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία, the ἀκολουθία within creation, and the soteriological ἀκολουθία. These structure the entire work and, in a fitting sequence, they set in motion the *reditus* of human beings towards the Triune Godhead, through which they are drawn into the circle of God’s glory. Given these three ἀκολουθίαι, the second guiding principle for Gregory’s theology is the order of tradition of the persons of the Trinity:

For this reason, apart from the difference in order and in subsistence, we comprehend no variation [among them] in any respect. Instead, while we maintain that it is numbered third in the sequence after Father and Son, and third in the order of the tradition, we confess its inseparable connection in all other respects: in nature, honor, deity, glory, majesty, omnipotence, and in the pious confession.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,19–26

The three ἀκολουθίαι, together with the order, the sequence of the divine persons as tradition has it, find their culmination in the key phrase of this work:

Rather, the Father is the fount of power, the Son is the Father’s power, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of power.

Maced GNO III.I. 100,1–3

It is God's one and undivided δύναμις that leads Gregory to speak about God, and this in such a way that this speaking about God results in human beings speaking to God.

3 Doxology as Speaking to God

Gregory's speaking about God results in speaking to God, the doxological speaking to God, the praise and adoration of the Triune Godhead. This doxological speaking is made possible thanks to God's life-giving power, his one δύναμις, of which the Father is the source and the Spirit the spirit, while Christ is God's power. The life-giving power works upon the water of baptism, water that is transformed through the consecration (εἰ μὴ μεταποιηθεῖ διὰ τοῦ ἁγιάσματος, *Maced* GNO III.I.105,27). God's one power is made manifest in its threeness in baptism:

this is why the account teaches that there must first be faith in the name of the Father who 'gives life to all things', as the apostle says (1 Tim 6:13), seeing that from him the life-giving grace originates, gushing forth with life as if from a spring through the Only-Begotten Son, who is the true life, and is made complete in those who are worthy by the activity of the Spirit.

Maced GNO III.I. 106,3–8

Baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit makes the doxology of the Triune Godhead possible. The sequence of the three divine persons within the baptismal command of Mt 28:19 determines the sequence in the doxology: it is the sequence of the inner-Trinitarian ἀκολουθία. Gregory begins with the Father, he therefore includes the Son with the Father, and does not separate the Spirit from the Only-Begotten Son:

In this way, he will offer up thanksgiving for his own life, starting with the Father, grasping the Son along with the Father, and not separating the Spirit from the Only-Begotten.

Maced GNO III.I. 115,26–29

Central to Gregory's vision of doxological speaking, the speaking/singing to God in adoration and praise, as he develops it in his *Maced*, is the *homotimia* of the Spirit. In addressing the Father and the Son, one inescapably also accepts the Spirit:

But you will say that when you think of Father, the Son too is included in the title. Tell me, when you have apprehended the Son in your mind, haven't you also admitted the Holy Spirit? You cannot deny it. For how will you confess him, unless in the Holy Spirit? At what point, therefore, is the Spirit separated from the Son such that when the Father is worshiped the worship of the Spirit is not included along with [the worship of] the Son?

Maced GNO III.I. 110,24–30

Human beings who complete the *reditus* to God, are, thanks to the power which is Christ, of which the Father is the source and the Spirit is the spirit, drawn into the circle of divine glory and share in the mutual glorification of the divine persons:

'I have glorified you', the Lord says to the Father. And again, 'Glorify me with the glory that I had from the beginning from you, before the world began'. The divine voice answers, 'Indeed, I have glorified and will again glorify'. Do you see the circle of glorification revolving from like to like? The Son is glorified by the Spirit. The Father is glorified by the Son. Conversely, the Son has glory from the Father and the Only-Begotten becomes the glory of the Spirit. Indeed, in what will the Father be glorified, if not the true glory of the Only-Begotten? Again, in what will the Son be glorified, if not the majesty of the Spirit? Likewise, tracing the circle in reverse order, language glorifies the Son through the Spirit and the Father through the Son.

Maced GNO III.I. 109,4–15

Gregory concludes his work with an affirmation of the Spirit's *homotimia*:

Thus he will render to the God above all with the Only-Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit honor, glory, and worship unto endless ages. Amen.

Maced GNO III.I. 115,29–31

Baptism occupies a central place within the pneumatology that Gregory develops in *Maced*. As soon as human beings, through baptism and the imitation of Christ, become the Word that speaks and become restored images of the Image, their human language acquires hitherto unimaginable possibilities. Human beings who have been taken up into the divine life become what the Spirit is and is called: the glory of God, with which human beings participate in the circle of glory in the Trinity. The redemption of humankind, in Gregory's vis-

ion, also affects human language, which through the words of the Word attains new possibilities in human beings who participate in the divine life of the Trinity:

Likewise, tracing the circle in reverse order, language glorifies the Son through the Spirit and the Father through the Son.

Maced GNO III.I. 109,13–15

The tentative language of metaphor has received a new and decisive force thanks to the incarnation of the Word. Through the incarnation of the Word, God in his humanity has assumed a name: Jesus Christ. Human words may not be capable of describing the essence of God, and cannot be anything more than shadows of God's actions, but human beings who bear the name of Christ, through the power of baptism share in the community of Christ, and therefore in the power of the word of the incarnate Word. It is precisely because of the incarnation that the tentative language of metaphor about God's salvific actions in Jesus Christ can, thanks to the power of the Spirit, make true statements, however deficient they may be.⁷ In view of all this, we may regard the words that the minister of baptism speaks on the authority and in the power of the Spirit, as *performative*. The linguistic utterances of the minister bring about the effects of their metaphors in reality.

In his baptism, the incarnate Word drew down the Spirit upon the baptismal water. In the blessing given by the priest as the Word that speaks, the Spirit comes upon the baptismal water, which thus acquires efficaciousness for every human being who converts to Christ and who becomes a speaker of the Word through the inhabitation of the Word, and who is thus able to utter holy and unspeakable words. Human language shares in the redemption. The metaphorical utterances that human beings make about baptism retain, it is true, their metaphorical hue and their corresponding obscurity of meaning, but they partially lose the limitations that are inherent to their metaphorical value: in the

7 SCOT DOUGLASS, A Critical Analysis of Gregorius's Philosophy of Language: the Linguistic Reconstitution of Metadiastemic Intrusions, in: HUBERTUS R. DROBNER & ALBERT VICIANO (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Homilies on the Beatitudes. An English Version with Commentary and Supporting Studies. Proceedings of the Eighth International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa, 1998* (VCS 52), Leiden 2000, 447–465, speaks on p. 465 of a metaphorical space that is mysterious, inaccessible, and obscure. This space is created by paradoxical, metaphorical poles, underpinned by apophatic qualifications. His conclusion is that “the ability of language to reconstitute metaphorically the metadiastemic space of the uncreated reality of God validates the use of language within a diastemic episteme to approach asymptotically the nature of God.”

apophasis that is the fitting accompaniment of metaphorical language, they incomprehensibly evoke effects that have the force of reality. Thus the baptised gain the ability to participate in the celestial hymn of praise, and they are drawn into the intimacy of the life of the Trinity. In the adoration of the Trinity, they share in the circle of glory within the Trinity, and become what the Spirit is and is called: the glory of the Trinity.

Likewise, tracing the circle in reverse order, language glorifies the Son through the Spirit and the Father through the Son.

οὕτω πάλιν καὶ ἀνακυκλούμενος ὁ λόγος τὸν υἱὸν μὲν δοξάζει
διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, διὰ δὲ τοῦ υἱοῦ τὸν πατέρα

Conclusion: Gregory's Theology of the Spirit Casts Light on Contemporary Trinitarian Theology

1 Rediscovering the Spirit

Contemporary Trinitarian theology has rediscovered the Spirit. Within the theology of creation, of the Church, of the sacraments, and of grace, the Spirit has equally been assigned a more prominent place, thanks in no small part to the development of contemporary Trinitarian theology, in which the doctrine of the Spirit has come to play a greater role.¹

Not only theology, but also the pronouncements of the Church's magisterium have been increasingly attentive to the Spirit.²

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, adopted by Vatican II on 21 November 1964, takes a strictly Trinitarian approach to the Church.³ The Church is described as the fruitage of the Trinity (chapter I.1., end).⁴

Sic apparet universa Ecclesia sicuti de unitate Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti plebs adunata.

It is the task of the Spirit ("missus est Spiritus Sanctus die Pentecostes", chapter I.4., beginning) to continually sanctify the Church and thus to give Christ's faithful people access to the Father. This participation in the divine life means

1 HERWI RIKHOF, *The Current Renaissance*, 455–456, provides arguments for this statement and concludes that the theology of baptism is fertile ground for a study of the activities of the Spirit.

2 I limit myself here to the pronouncements of the magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church.

3 For the Latin text and an authorised German translation, see PETER HÜNERMANN (ed.), *Herders Theologischer Kommentar zum Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil. Konstitutionen, Dekrete, Erklärungen. Lateinisch-deutsche Studienausgabe*. Band 1, called *Die Dokumente des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils Lateinisch-Deutsch*, Freiburg 2004, 2. Auflage, on pp. 73–185 contains the Latin text in the *Acta Synodalia sacrosancti concilii oecumenici Vaticani II* and an authorised German translation of *Lumen Gentium*.

4 After a quotation of Cyprian *De Oratione Dominica* 23 (HENRY GEE [ed.], *Th. C. Cypriani De Oratione Dominica*, London 1904, 19): "Sacrificium Deo maius est pax nostra et concordia fraterna et de unitate Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti plebs adunata."

participation in the circle of the Triune God: from the Father to the Son, and through him in the Spirit to the Church, and back again, from the Church through Christ, in the Spirit to the Father. This Constitution on the Church contains a fully-fledged pneumatology.⁵ It is the Spirit who, as the *gratia increata*, is abidingly present both in the Church and in every believer to sanctify them and provide all *gratiae creatae*. The inhabitation of the Spirit in the Church and in every believer receives particular emphasis. This means that the *munus triplex* (priest, king, and prophet) is entrusted to every baptised person. Finally, the eschatological fulfilment of the Church is called a task of the Spirit.

Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Dominum et vivificantem*, promulgated on Pentecost 1986, offers a detailed view on the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and the world, and lays claim to being a direct heritage of Vatican II.⁶ An important assertion is that the conciliar documents challenge us to enter more deeply into the mystery of the Trinity, in the manner of the human *reditus*: “ad Patrem—per Christum—ducimur in Spiritu Sancto” (no. 2). The baptism of Jesus in the Jordan with the accompanying anointing by the Spirit is called a “theophania trinitaria” (no. 19). The definitive sending of the Spirit in the history of salvation took place after Christ's passion, death, and resurrection: the

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- 5 Cf. P.J. MULLINS, *The Teaching of LUMEN GENTIUM on the Holy Spirit: the Holy Spirit was Sent at Pentecost in order that He Might Continually Sanctify the Church* (PhD PU Gregoriana Rome 1990—UMI Dissertation Services: authorized facsimile), Michigan 1994. This dissertation provides an extensive diachronic description of the genesis of *Lumen Gentium*, at least with regard to this document's teaching on the Holy Spirit. For section 1.4., see pp. 172–186. DANIELE GIANOTTI, *Les Pères de l'Église et Lumen Gentium*, in: *Ressourcement. Les Pères de l'Église et Vatican II*, Paris 2013, 19–40, has demonstrated the importance of the *ressourcement patristique* for the form and content of this constitution: “un petit miracle de Saint-Esprit”, p. 28. JOHN D. ZIZIOULAS, *Being as Communion. Studies in Personhood and the Church*, New York 1985, 129–142, has stood up for a more important role of pneumatology being made constitutive for Christology and ecclesiology. On p. 141: “We need an ontology of communion. We need to make communion condition the very being of the Church, not the well-being but the being of it. On the theological level this would mean assigning a constitutive role to Pneumatology, not one dependent of Christology. This Vatican II has not done, but its notion of communion can do.” JOS MOONS, *The Spirit and the Church. A Redaction-Historical and Theological-Historical Analysis of the Pneumatological Renewal in Lumen Gentium*, PhD Tilburg University 2018, concludes that *Lumen Gentium* represents a promising step forward in overcoming *Geistvergangenheit*. However, he concludes also that the Spirit is frequently conceived as Christ's instrument rather than as himself actively involved in the Church.
- 6 *Dominum et vivificantem*, no. 2: “Manaverunt (sc. hae Litterae de Spiritu Sancto) scilicet ex hereditate Concilii ac quidem ex eius profundo; etenim textus Concilii, doctrina sua de Ecclesia in se ac de Ecclesia in mundo, nos excitant ut in mysterium Trinitatis Dei ipsius magis magisque penetremus, iter Evangelii, Patrum, Liturgiae sequentes: quo videlicet ad Patrem—per Christum—ducimur in Spiritu Sancto.”

disciples receive the Holy Spirit, the *gratia increata*, followed by all baptised. The letter addressed to the bishops of the Catholic Church by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on Pentecost 2016, entitled *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, regarding the relationship between the hierarchical and the charismatic gifts in the life and the mission of the Church, describes the gifts of the Spirit and the Spirit's gift of self in the manner of the divine *exitus*.⁷

The rediscovery of the Spirit in Trinitarian theology, and the ensuing pronouncements by the Church's magisterium, are so many expressions of the 'renaissance' of Trinitarian theology itself.⁸ In his important article *The Current Renaissance of the Theology of the Trinity—a Reconstruction*, Herwi Rikhof offers a reconstruction of the recent revival of Trinitarian theology. Karl Rahner played a major role in this, after Karl Barth had described Christian theology as Trinitarian by definition.⁹ Rahner objected to the irrelevance of the Triune Godhead within contemporary spirituality and theology. At the root of this irrelevance is the separation between the reflection *de Deo Uno* and *de Deo Trino* that has been in evidence in Western theology since the Middle Ages, a separation between God's inner life and God's saving actions, and the corresponding separation between natural theology or the philosophy of God, which treats of *de Deo uno* on the basis of human reason, and the theology of salvation proper, which treats of *de Deo Trino* on the basis of revelation. Rahner intended to cure 'the lethal illness of the irrelevance of the Trinity', a consequence of this separation, with his famous axiom "Die 'ökonomische' Trinität ist die 'immanente' Trinität und umgekehrt."¹⁰ Any discussion of God's Trinity must

7 *Iuvenescit Ecclesia*, no. 11: "every gift comes from the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Spirit in the Church is bound to the mission of the Son, accomplished definitively in his Paschal Mystery ... The action of God in history always implies the relationship between the Son and the Holy Spirit, who, in Irenaeus of Lyon's evocative words, are called 'the two hands of the Father'."

8 HERWI RIKHOF, *The Current Renaissance*, 423–457, has been of great assistance in writing the remainder of this *Completion*.

9 For Karl Barth's role, see ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK, How does God enter into Theology? Reasons for the Centrality of Trinitarian Discourse in Christian Dogmatics, in: GIULIO MASPERO & ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK (ed.), *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology. Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, New York 2012, 423–445, pp. 425–430.

10 KARL RAHNER, Der dreifaltige Gott als transzendenter Urgrund der Heilsgeschichte, in: Johannes Feiner & Magnus Löhrer (ed.), *Mysterium Salutis. Grundriss heilsgeschichtlicher Dogmatik. Band 2*, Einsiedeln 1967, 318–401, p. 328. PHILIP GABRIEL RENCZES, The Scope of Rahner's Fundamental Axiom in the Patristic Perspective. A Dialogue of Systematic and Historical Theology, in: GIULIO MASPERO & ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK (ed.), *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology. Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, New York 2012, 254–288, has demonstrated, with ample references to the literature, both

begin with the history of salvation. Rikhof rightly argues that the unintended implication of Rahner's axiom—that there are two Trinities—can be avoided by using two patristic terms instead: *oikonomia* and *theologia*. These refer to two ways of speaking about the Trinity.¹¹ An important consideration is that theological discourse is based on religious discourse: God's speaking and speaking to God precede and provide the foundation for speaking about God. It must immediately be added that speaking about God, theological discourse, affects the way people speak to God and the way they interpret God's speaking. Bernard Lonergan's significant theological work on the Trinity helped to broaden the diagnosis. He once more placed the Trinity at the heart of Christian theology and spirituality.¹²

In view of Rahner's diagnosis and the widely accepted therapy (speaking about God must be based upon God's life with humankind and the world, upon the history of salvation which culminates in the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, his life, death and resurrection), I will conclude my analysis of Gregory of Nyssa's *Maced* by exploring in outline whether Gregory and the theology of the Spirit he develops in this work can therapeutically contribute to the attempt to return the Spirit to the heart of lived faith. In the light of Gregory's view of the specific role of the Spirit in *Maced*, I will limit my inquiry to the question as to whether Gregory's *Maced* contains elements that can help to widen our current view of the role of the Spirit, in aid of a contemporary Christology in Trinitarian perspective, and that strengthen the link that is made in contemporary Trinitarian theology between soteriology and doxology. Gregory's contribution is all the more interesting because contemporary scholars from the Eastern

the indebtedness of Rahner's axiom to the Greek patristic tradition and its questionable aspect (including the fact that it imperils God's absolute freedom). Renczes has rightly pointed out the significance of the axiom for a connection of the doctrine of the Trinity with the theology of grace. The Church Fathers, including the Cappadocians, Augustine and Maximus the Confessor, connect Trinitarian theology with soteriology to such a degree that the former culminates in doxology.

11 HERWI RIKHOF, *The Current Renaissance*, 441–442.

12 Bernard J.F. Lonergan, while a professor at the Gregorian University (1953–1964) authored a two-volume Latin textbook entitled *De Deo Trino* that was published in his *Collected Works* together with an English translation: BERNARD J.F. LONERGAN, *De Deo Trino. Pars systematica. The Triune God: Systematics* (*Collected Works*, 12; ROBERT M. DORAN & H. DANIEL MONSOUR [ed.], MICHAEL G. SHIELDS [tr.]), Toronto 2007. BERNARD J.F. LONERGAN, *De Deo Trino. Pars dogmatica. The Triune God: Doctrines* (*Collected Works*, 11; ROBERT M. DORAN & H. DANIEL MONSOUR [ed.], MICHAEL G. SHIELDS [tr.]), Toronto 2009. In this last work, pp. 474 and 476 (Latin), pp. 475 and 477 (English translation), Lonergan describes Gregory's importance for the development of systematic Trinitarian theology.

Orthodox, the Roman Catholic, and the Anglican tradition acknowledge that Gregory in particular transcends the differences between Eastern and Western theology.¹³

I realise it is futile and inappropriate to seek answers from Gregory to questions that are being asked now. But it is possible to strive to broaden our perspective on the basis of Gregory's texts. It is for this reason, too, that I will not look to Gregory from our contemporary context as *arbiter fidei*, as if he were still charged with the task of correcting erroneous insights (ἐπὶ διορθώσει τῶν μοχθηρῶν ὑπολήψεων, *Maced* GNO III.I. 89,10), but as a physician who can help us therapeutically by opening our eyes to new Trinitarian perspectives.

One of these Trinitarian perspectives is the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit, in addition to that between Jesus and the Word. The pneumatological dimensions of the relationship between God and Jesus Christ and his work of salvation are crucial if we are to do justice to the Christological mystery.¹⁴

2 Gregory Casts Light on Contemporary Trinitarian Theology

2.1 *The Composition of Adversus Macedonianos as a Structural Principle*

Gregory can help contemporary theologians who are eager to give a more prominent place to Trinitarian theology by his choice of literary form in his work. In using the counteraccusation that *Maced* contains, he composes his work on the basis of the history of salvation as it is revealed in God's *exitus* and human beings' *reditus* to God. This structure demonstrates how God, as the Triune Godhead, connects with people and draws people into his divine life, the life of the Triune Godhead. It is the Holy Spirit who plays the key role at the intersecting point between God's *exitus* and human beings' return, their *reditus*, which is an ascent, an *anabasis*, to the Triune Godhead, so as to be drawn by the Son into the divine glory of the Father and the Son and the Spirit. This way of structuring a theological work, following the line that runs from *exitus* to *reditus*, Gregory's choice of this line from *exitus* to *reditus* as a structural principle, can

13 SARAH COAKLEY, Introduction. Gender, Trinitarian Analogies, and the Pedagogy of *The Song*, in: SARAH COAKLEY (ed.), *Re-thinking Gregory of Nyssa*, Oxford 2003, 1–13, pp. 4–5, in her introduction to a series of contributions by Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Anglican scholars, speaks of an exchange of perspectives that converge “on a reassessment of Gregory’s significance as one refusing to be ‘boxed’ into the stereotype of an ‘Easterner’ rudely confronting the supposed trinitarian ‘mentalism’ of ‘the West.’”

14 RALPH DEL COLLE, *Christ and the Spirit. Christology in Trinitarian Perspective*, Oxford 1994, 3–4.

undeniably strengthen our view of the importance of Trinitarian theology and give the Holy Spirit the central place that he deserves.

2.2 *The lex orandi as the Guiding Principle for the lex credendi*

Gregorius develops his grammar of speech about God on the basis of God's speaking in Scripture and the utterances of the Fathers that are based upon it, as well as on the liturgy's speaking to God, doxological speech. The *lex orandi*, founded on Scripture and tradition, is Gregory's guide when it comes to eventually determining the *lex credendi*. Doxological speech leads Gregory to an awareness of apophatic speech about God. The interplay between doxology and apophasis that we find in Gregory is a salutary example for contemporary theology that can be characterised as postmodern.

2.3 *The Coherence between oikonomia and theologia*

Gregory connects the two ways of speaking about the Trinity, *oikonomia* and *theologia*, with each other in exemplary fashion, a prefigurement of Bernard Lonergan's triad (*experience, understanding, judgment*).¹⁵ The result of speaking *by* God is that Gregory is able to speak *about* God as a theological activity. Through this theological activity, his thinking and speaking about God's self-revelation in the person of Christ and in the Holy Spirit, he is able to perceive the Trinity *ad intra*, and the result of this thinking and speaking is the *theologia*. He then affirms the bond that he observes between the mystery of the divine Trinity and God's plan of salvation for his creation, resulting in the *oikonomia*. This affirmation, which is apophatic through and through, unconditionally leads to doxological speaking by human beings *to* God: praising and worshipping Him, in the power of the Spirit. Soteriology and doxology are seamlessly connected.

Human language is essential to speaking by God, to speaking about God, and to speaking to God. Human language as it is used in these forms of speech can be regarded as a Christological and pneumatological entity of a Trinitarian nature.¹⁶ *Maced* teaches that the Spirit ennobles the exegete's Scriptural interpretation and the systematic theologian's work of theological ordering by turning these into doxology, thus adding voices to the homage that all of creation brings to the Triune Godhead.

15 BERNARD LONERGAN, *Insight*, 381.

16 ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK, How does God enter into Theology? Reasons for the Centrality of Trinitarian Discourse in Christian Dogmatics, in: GIULIO MASPERO & ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK (ed.), *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology. Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, New York 2012, 423–445, pp. 437–443.

2.4 *Gregory Connects Logos Christology with Spirit Christology*

In *Maced*, Gregory connects the familiar Logos Christology with a Spirit-based Christology in an original way.

In Logos Christology, the emphasis is on the sending into the world of the Son by the Father, and on the sending into the world of the Spirit from the Father by Christ, in order to complete Christ's work. On the basis of this double mission, the Early Church witnessed the development of the Trinitarian doctrine of the eternal processions of the Son and the Spirit.

In Spirit Christology, the emphasis is on the Spirit who rests upon Christ (see the baptism in the Jordan) and on Christ's return to the Father in the power of the Spirit together with the faithful, so that they can become children of God. In this Christology, that which makes Jesus the Son of God is ascribed to the Holy Spirit.¹⁷

Gregory connects these two Christologies in the following way. His work *Maced* contains a key sentence (*Maced* GNO III.I. 100,1–3):

ἀλλὰ πηγὴ μὲν δυνάμεως ἐστὶν ὁ πατήρ, δύναμις δὲ τοῦ πατρὸς ὁ υἱός, δυνάμεως δὲ πνεῦμα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄγιον.

The Holy Spirit, as the spirit of the power of the Father which is the Son, of which power the Father is the source, is at work at the point where God's *exitus* and human beings' *reditus* intersect. The Son goes from the Father to human beings, upon whom the Son bestows the Spirit, so that they are able to make their *reditus*. Human beings can then be drawn into the divine glory, in accordance with Logos Christology. Jesus is empowered at his baptism in the Jordan, anointed with the Holy Spirit and with the power of the Father. Jesus *becomes* the power of the Father, to serve us, human beings, in accordance with Spirit Christology. Gregory connects these two Christologies by viewing Jesus' anointing during his earthly life at his baptism in the Jordan as the reflection of what happens within the Trinitarian immanence: the Father anoints the Son as king with the anointing oil of kingship, the Spirit, who is called the living, substantial and personified kingship (βασιλεία δὲ ζῶσα καὶ οὐσιώδης καὶ ἐνυπόστατος τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄγιον, *Maced* GNO III.I. 102,27–28) and the personified glory (*Maced* GNO III.I. 109,1–2) that the Father and the Son exchange. The anointing oil is

17 PIET SCHOONENBERG, *De Geest, het Woord en de Zoon—Theologische overdenkingen over Geest-christologie, logos-christologie en drieënhedenleer*, Averbode-Kampen 1991, 40. In the conviction that Logos Christology and Spirit Christology are two approaches to the same mystery of Jesus, Schoonenberg contends on p. 43 that these two approaches are complementary.

the Spirit's inner-Trinitarian gift to the Son, who through this is the power of the Father. Gregory does distinguish between the eternal anointing within the immanence of God and the anointing of Jesus by the Holy Spirit during his human existence, but does not separate these anointings: there is a double kingship. Jesus' anointing during his earthly life at his baptism in the Jordan reflects his eternal anointing within God's immanence *and* is the prefigurement of the baptism of Christians, anointed people who are given a share in the kingship and the glory, i.e. the Spirit. Jesus' first (Mt 3:15) and last words (Mt 28:19–20) in Matthew's Gospel are about his own baptism and the baptism of his disciples respectively.¹⁸ The one divine δύναιμι becomes an image of the divine Trinity with its own inner-Trinitarian succession, ἀκολουθία, and its own inner-Trinitarian order, τάξις, which is reflected in the creation and the redemption and is made visible there in its effects.

In this way Gregory develops a Christology that has a truly Trinitarian scope, in which the anointing by the Spirit forms the connection between a Logos Christology and a Spirit Christology.¹⁹

In the connection between these two Christologies as Gregory establishes it, human beings are able, given God's *exitus*, i.e. the sending of the Son, who goes forth from the Father to humankind and bestows the Spirit upon human beings, to go in the opposite direction: coming in the Spirit to the Son, who brings human beings to the Father. This return to the Father is continued in the share that human beings are given in the mutual dynamic glorification of the Trinity. The Spirit stands at the end of the Trinitarian *exitus*, thus playing a key role in drawing human beings into the Trinitarian *reditus*, i.e. human beings are given the true life thanks to the ἐνέργεια of the Spirit. Baptism is the turning point where God's undivided power, in this case the ἐνέργεια of the Spirit, works the salvation of human beings. The baptised share in the anointing of the Son by the Spirit, who is kingship and divine glory.

His key sentence allows Gregory to depict the unity of activity of the Trinity as flowing from the immanent union of the three divine persons. Human beings in their feeble power are drawn into the Trinitarian life of God.

¹⁸ HERWI RIKHOF, *The Current Renaissance*, 452, has pointed this out.

¹⁹ LUIS F. LADARIA, *The Living and True God. The Mystery of the Trinity* (transl. by MARIA I. REYNA & LIAM KELLY), Miami 2010, 90, has pointed out that the rich theology of Jesus' anointing is soon set to disappear from the consciousness of the Church: "What will prevail is a current that will tend to identify (the anointing) or simply reduce it to the incarnation. In this way, the fact that the Spirit rests or reposes on Jesus will tend to be confused with the hypostatic union and will not be considered an aspect theologically relevant in itself."

Inspired by Augustine's theory of mutual love (the Holy Spirit is the bond of mutual love between the Father and the Son), David Coffey has proposed an alternative order in his own return model, in the Trinitarian immanence, in the life of Jesus, and in eschatology: Father—Holy Spirit—Son—Holy Spirit—Father.²⁰ This return model or union model complements the traditional procession model or distinction model that is more customary in the West. Precisely because Gregory regards the anointing of Jesus in his earthly life as a reflection of what happens in the Trinitarian immanence (the Father anoints the Son as king with the anointing oil of kingship, the Spirit), Gregory's traditional *reditus* model (in the Spirit through the Son to the Father, with the Spirit as kingship personified, glory personified) can be regarded as an early precursor to David Coffey's return model. The anointing of Jesus by the Spirit at his baptism in the Jordan, which Gregory connects with the Trinitarian immanence and with every Christian's baptism, deserves further elaboration in contemporary Trinitarian theology, to further strengthen the link between soteriology and doxology.

2.5 *The proprium of the Spirit in the Context of the Theology of Grace*

Contemporary pneumatologies and corresponding Trinitarian theology are seeking to define the *proprium* of the Spirit. Gregory's vision of the Spirit within the Trinity in *Maced* can offer useful perspectives on how the *proprium* of the Spirit can be approached. This *proprium* can help to acquire a deeper understanding of the theology of grace.

Describing the *proprium* of the Spirit is a specific form of speaking about God as the Triune Godhead. The principle *Opera trinitatis ad extra indivisa sunt* is no obstacle to seeking and finding a *proprium* of the Spirit. In describing the *proprium* of the Spirit, we attempt to distinguish what we can know of God, not his essence, but his activities, distinguished for each of the three divine persons, in this case to define the activity of the Spirit. These actions and the roles that the three divine persons play in terms of the *oikonomia* reflect those of the Trinity *ad intra*. The baptised share in the intimacy of the Trinitarian divine life and are therefore able to confess in its quality of *proprium* that which must be ascribed as appropriation to each divine person.

Gregory gives a theological reflection of his own on the personhood of the members of the Triune Godhead, in the light of which we can attempt to identify their *propria* in Gregory's work, in this case the *proprium* of the Spirit. Gregory's vision on the personhood of the divine persons does not allow for a

20 DAVID COFFEY, *Deus Trinitas*, 44.

description of this vision in the terms that e.g. Boethius and Descartes used for the person. Instead, Gregory's vision of the common will of the divine persons can serve as a reorientation for modern Trinitarian theologians who use psychological categories in their description of the personhood of the divine persons.²¹ For the Cappadocian Fathers the dangers of individualism were hardly a pressing matter, so that their main concern was not the distinction between person and individual, but rather that between person/individual on the one hand and nature on the other.²² For Gregory, the perfect unity of the will of the Father, of that of the Son, and of that of the Spirit, is a sign of the divine nature, just as there is unity within the will of each divine person separately. It is precisely this perfect unity within each divine person and between the three divine persons together that distinguishes the Trinity from human beings, who do not have one will within themselves and who differ in their mutual wills. Against this background it can be understood that Gregory in the case of the Trinity is able to conclude from the unity of activity that there is unity of nature.

The uniqueness of the divine persons is primarily situated in their opposite relationships.²³ Human words are capable of expressing the *manner* of being of the divine persons, even within the immanence of the Trinity. Within the one nature of God, there are three distinct manners of being. Time and eternity are not fully separate. The activity of God connects *theologia* and *oikonomia*: in the ἐνέργεια of God who manifests himself in time, time and eternity, the many and the one meet. The foundation for affirmations about the Trinity *ad intra* is God's plan of salvation that can be found in Scripture if this is read in the Spirit: the *theologia*, the manner of speaking about the Trinity in terms of God's mystery, which inspires us to reread Scripture with a clearer perspective and which gives us a view of the connection between God's mystery of the Trinity and God's plan of salvation with his creation. The result is a speaking in the Spirit that culminates in apophatic speechlessness and in adoring knowledge of the Trinity.

Gregory of Nyssa works towards a distinction between the hypostases and the divine nature. The Spirit must be viewed in its own right given certain dis-

21 MICHEL RENÉ BARNES, *Divine Unity and the Divided Self: Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian Theology in its Psychological Context*, in: SARAH COAKLEY (ed.), *Re-thinking Gregory of Nyssa*, Oxford 2003, 45–66, p. 60.

22 LUCIAN TURCESCU, "Person" versus "Individual", and Other Modern Misreadings of Gregory of Nyssa, in: SARAH COAKLEY (ed.), *Re-thinking Gregory of Nyssa*, Oxford 2003, 97–109, pp. 106–107.

23 For the concept of the divine persons in Gregory of Nyssa's Trinitarian treatises, see LUCIAN TURCESCU, *Gregory of Nyssa and the Concept of Divine Persons*, Oxford, 2005, *passim*.

tinct characteristics (τιςιν ἑξαιρέτοις ιδιώμασιν, *Maced GNO III.I. 90,3*) and is not intertwined with, and is distinct from the Father in his quality of being unborn (τὸ ἀγέννητον, *Maced GNO III.I. 90,1–2*), and from the Son in his quality of being only-begotten (τὸ μονογενές, *Maced GNO III.I. 90,2*). Gregory here is seeking the *proprium* of the Spirit, on the basis of Scripture, of course, which he reads in the Spirit. The Spirit is *from God and of Christ, as it is written* (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστι καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστι, καθὼς γέγραπται, *Maced GNO III.I. 89,25–90,1*). The Son and the Spirit have this in common that they have their sole cause in the Father, who himself is uncaused, but they are otherwise distinct: the *proprium* of the Spirit is the receiving of the life that comes from the Father through the Son (ἐκ τοῦ υἱοῦ λαμβανόμενον, *Maced GNO III.I. 97,12–13*; paraphrase of Jn 16:14–15), while the *proprium* of the Son is its mirror image: the transmitting of the life that comes from the Father to the Spirit, who in turn transmits this life to the creation and to the baptised, so that human beings can make their *reditus*. Given his divinity and his inner-Trinitarian gift to the Son of the anointing of the kingship, as the spirit of the power which is the Son, the Spirit from his own possessions provides the gifts *ad extra*, gifts that he possesses by nature, to creation. He gives himself to the baptizands, the human beings who are reborn through baptism and are made into a new creation. In the Spirit these human beings receive his anointing of the kingship and his divine glory. In receiving the Spirit, the baptizands acknowledge the dignity of the Spirit. In the Spirit and with the Spirit, Christians are brought to worship and give honour to the Triune Godhead. The close connection between the *lex orandi* and the *lex credendi* opens a perspective on the *proprium* of the Spirit.

In receiving the Spirit, the baptised receive the life of which Gregory said that the Spirit receives it through the Son from the Father. It is the Father who gives the kingship and the glory, which is the Spirit, to the Son, and thus makes of the Son the perfect Image of himself; in turn, the Son glorifies the Father with the glory that is the Holy Spirit:

Do you see the circle of glorification revolving from like to like? The Son is glorified by the Spirit. The Father is glorified by the Son. Conversely, the Son has glory from the Father and the Only-Begotten becomes the glory of the Spirit. Indeed, in what will the Father be glorified, if not the true glory of the Only-Begotten? Again, in what will the Son be glorified, if not the majesty of the Spirit? Likewise, tracing the circle in reverse order, language glorifies the Son through the Spirit and the Father through the Son.

Maced GNO III.I. 109,7–15

With the gift of the Spirit as a gift of self, the baptised share in the divine life, they become the likeness of the Son and share in the kingship of Christ. Knowledge of the Triune Godhead is possible only in the adoring and apophatic awareness that God is one *because* he is tri-une.²⁴

Gregory's *Maced* helps contemporary theologians in their search for the *proprium* of the Spirit.²⁵

2.6 Gregory's Doctrine of the Spirit as Gift of Self in the Context of Theological Phenomenology

In the Gifford Lectures which he gave in Glasgow in 2014, Jean-Luc Marion attempted to bridge the chasm between metaphysics or natural theology and the theology of revelation by using his phenomenology of givenness, which represents a theological turn in phenomenology. Can the philosophy of religion become the phenomenology of religion? At the heart of Marion's phenomenological approach to revelation stands Jesus Christ, whom he describes as the icon of the invisible God and as saturated phenomenon, i.e. an overwhelming and blinding phenomenon that transcends conceptuality in terms of quantity, quality, relationship and modality, and that gives itself gratuitously (as Christ's transfiguration reminds us), floods our intentionality, and has no need of the workings of our consciousness.²⁶ Marion's phenomenological approach to the Trinity is rooted in the Spirit as gift of self. In his last lecture, entitled *A Logic of Manifestation. The Trinity*, pp. 89–115, Marion uses Basil's *De Spiritu Sancto* and Augustine's *De Trinitate* as points of reference for his vision.

Gregory's vision of the Spirit as the spirit of the power which is Jesus Christ as the Son of the Father is capable of strengthening Marion's argument.

24 GIULIO MASPERO, Patristic Trinitarian Ontology, in: GIULIO MASPERO & ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK (ed.), *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology. Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, New York 2012, 211–229, p. 226.

25 One example of this is Chungman Lee's interesting attempt to shed new light on the currently existing controversies on the *Filioque* with the aid of Gregory of Nyssa's and Augustine's works. Lee describes the *proprium* of the Spirit as defined by Gregory and Augustine, and concludes that they share the same view; see his dissertation *The Filioque Reconsidered—The Contribution of Gregory of Nyssa and Augustine of Hippo to Contemporary Discussion on the Filioque*, PhD Kampen 2020.

26 JEAN LUC MARION, *Givenness and Revelation*, Gifford Lectures Glasgow 2014, (transl. by S.T.E. LEWIS), Oxford 2016. KNUT ALFSVÅG, *What No Mind Has Conceived. On the Significance of Christological Apophaticism* (Studies in Philosophical Theology, 45), Leuven 2010, 297–309, has demonstrated the connection that Marion establishes between Christian apophasis—and the apophatic theology that is based on it—and contemporary philosophy.

Marion contends that it is the Spirit who illumines and directs the human gaze in such a way that it can see the two-dimensional icon in its full manifestation, in its three-dimensionality. This requires an *anamorphosis*, through which the incomprehensible and indescribable beauty of seeing the Father as archetype of the Son enfolds before the human eye in the icon Jesus Christ, thus revealing the Father's gaze upon the Son, and the Son's gaze upon the Father in their glory. The Spirit works this *anamorphosis*. In doing so, he is the leader of the Trinitarian revelation of God, and fulfils a sanctifying role. The Spirit is the 'phenomenal' access to the iconic seeing of the Father in the Son, Jesus Christ.

Gregory's key sentence about the power which is Christ, of which the Father is the source and the Spirit is the spirit, can help to give further depth to Marion's argument. The aspect of power is to the fore. The Spirit's gift of self, which, as Augustine's *De Trinitate* v [XI,12] says, as *donum Dei* is both *donum donatoris* and *donator doni*, effects the complete 'phenomenon' of the gift.²⁷ This is what the Spirit does as the spirit of the power according to Gregory of Nyssa. As the spirit of the power being the *donum Dei*, the Spirit gives the power (*donum donatoris*) for the *anamorphosis* and, as gift of self, gives the power (*donator doni*) that ensures that human beings in their *reditus* to God become a gift of self, and are thus included in the circle of divine glory.

The phenomenality of Christ as saturated phenomenon is visible in its full and overwhelming glory at his baptism in the Jordan, when he was anointed with the Spirit and when the words of his Father were heard. The phenomenality applies equally to the baptism of Christians, as a derivative of Christ's baptism. The overwhelming activity of the Spirit, his ἐνέργεια, upon the baptismal water and upon the baptizand is a manifestation of the Trinitarian δόναμις, a sign of God's incomprehensible nature. Due to the life-creating power of the Trinity, the baptised in their faith and in their adoration of the divinity of Father and Son and Spirit are drawn into the dynamic circle of glory, of which the Spirit is the personification. The glory that human beings give consists of offering their good will, their human and feeble προάρεσις and the corresponding good deeds that have their source in God, as a mirror of God's immeasurable power.

27 JEAN LUC MARION, *Givenness and Revelation*, 113: "The Holy Spirit alone gives because he gives not only what he gives, like a delivery man or an intermediary (*donum donatoris*); he gives giving, giving in itself, the act, the art, and the secret of giving (*donator doni*)."

2.7 Gregory's *Adversus Macedonianos* Contributes to an Ontology Based on *relatio*²⁸

In Gregory's Trinitarian theology, *relatio* is the ontological foundation; human beings are drawn into the *relatio* of the three divine persons thanks to the Spirit. For Gregory, the power of God is a description of Life. The Spirit as the spirit of the power gives this life to human beings. The Father begets the Son, brings forth the Son of all eternity, as the Father's gift of self to the Son, the Son of God or the Son of His Love (υἱὸν τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ, *Cant* VII GNO VI. 213,16–17), born of love, not of necessity.²⁹ God's life begets divine life, which the Son receives in fullness and which he transmits to the Spirit, who goes to humankind as a lifegiving gift of self. Father and Son are connected by the Spirit, the personification of the divine glory that they mutually exchange. Each of the three divine persons stands in co-relation to the other two persons. The divine substance is identical to the three divine persons and thus to God's eternal relations: God's *communio*.³⁰ This reveals an ontology that is a radical departure from Greek philosophy: the ontology of the divine, the Trinitarian ontology, is based on *relatio* and *communio*.³¹

28 GIULIO MASPERO, Patristic Trinitarian Ontology, in: GIULIO MASPERO & ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK (ed.), *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology. Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, London 2012, 211–229, was of assistance in writing this section.

29 *Cant* VII GNO VI. 213,15–17: διαφέρει πάντως οὐδὲν ἢ υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ λέγειν θεὸν ἢ υἱὸν τῆς ἀγάπης αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν Παύλου φωνὴν μιᾶς οὔσης καθ' ἑκάτερον ὄνομα τῆς νυφοστολοῦσης αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ συνοικίῃσι δυνάμεως. LUIS F. LADARIA, Tam Pater nemo. Reflections on the Paternity of God, in: GIULIO MASPERO & ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK (ed.), *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology. Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, New York 2012, 446–471, p. 470: "The paradox of the affirmation of the primacy of the Father and the equality of the three persons does not degenerate into contradiction. It is in some way illuminated if we take into account that the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit are the highest expression of complete gift of the One who is only love, and consequently is capable of eliciting the equally radical offering of those to whom it gives Himself without measure."

30 John Zizioulas has founded the coherence between communion and otherness in his *Being as Communion. Studies in Personhood and the Church*, New York 1985, and in his related book, *Communion and Otherness. Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, London—New York 2006, upon Gregory of Nyssa and Maximus the Confessor, among others: communion generates otherness, an ontology of personhood. GIULIO MASPERO, Relazione e ontologia in Gregorio di Nissa e Agostino di Ippona, in: *Scripta Theologica* 47 (2015) 607–641, shows, among other references on the basis of *Maced* GNO III.1. 102,22–31 and passages from Augustine's *De Trinitate*, that Gregory goes further than Augustine. Whereas Augustine adds *relatio* as a *tertium quid* to God's *substantia*, Gregory inserts *relatio/schesis* into God's immanence, thus opening a way towards an anthropology that is characterised on the basis of the Trinity by *relatio*.

31 GIULIO MASPERO, Life from Life: The Procession of the Son and the Divine Attributes in Book VIII of Gregory of Nyssa's *Contra Eunomium*, in: JOHAN LEEMANS & MATTHIEU

The Triune Godhead understood as *communio* manifests a new perspective on reality, on our human existence, our understanding of ourselves, our understanding of the world.³²

As Gregory demonstrates in his *Maced*, the acknowledgement—also intellectually—of God as *communio* and its theological expression inescapably leads to apophatic praise, the essential element of theology.³³

Soteriology and doxology are linked on the basis of this new ontology. Once human beings have been drawn into the *relatio* of the three divine persons thanks to the Spirit as the spirit of the power which is Christ, all that remains for them is to sing a hymn of praise to God's holiness.³⁴ Soteriology segues into doxology. The Trinitarian baptismal formula becomes a prayer of adoration. This prayer of adoration culminates in wordless worship, because the infinity, the immeasurable and incomprehensible greatness and beauty of the Triune Godhead are greater than can be expressed in words:³⁵

We have learned to honour by silence things above word and thought.

σιωπῇ τιμᾶν τὰ ὑπὲρ λόγον τε καὶ διάνοιαν μεμαθήκαμεν.

CASSIN (ed.), *Gregory of Nyssa: Contra Eunomium III, Proceedings of the 12th International Colloquium on Gregory of Nyssa—Leuven, 14–17 September 2010* (VCS 124), Leiden 2014, 401–428, p. 428: “The work of Gregory of Nyssa, the most speculative of the Cappadocians, can perhaps be interpreted as a demonstration that orthodox theology not only did not compromise with pagan philosophical thought, but also courageously developed a new conception of the real—pushed to this by the sense of the Scriptures themselves, i.e., by the reality of Christian salvation. If Greek ontology was born of the wonder before Being as perceived in created reality, Gregory's Trinitarian ontology is born of the encounter with the one and triune God, the God whose only name is *wonder*.”

- 32 GISEBERT GRESHAKE, Trinity as ‘Communio’. Towards a Communio-conception, in: GIULIO MASPERO & ROBERT J. WOŹNIAK (ed.), *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology. Disputed Questions and Contemporary Issues in Trinitarian Theology*, New York 2012, 331–345, on p. 345 quotes an anonymous Peruvian, who concluded from the proposition *God is Communio*: “hence we have to become *Communio*!”. Greshake regards this statement as “one of the best formulated axioms of the Christian faith that I know of.” GIULIO MASPERO, *Patristic Trinitarian Ontology*, 226: “Knowledge is only possible in relation, because being itself is relation in its depths, and to know is to recognize this relation.”
- 33 GIULIO MASPERO, *Patristic Trinitarian Ontology*, 227, compares this hymn of praise, which results from our acknowledgement that the ultimate ground of being is a relational mystery, to painting an icon. Like the icon, our concepts and theological doctrines only point to the mystery of being, characterised by divine transcendence.
- 34 ANTHONY J. GODZIEBA, The Trinitarian Mystery of God. A “Theological Theology”, in: FRANCIS SCHÜSSLER FIORENZA & JOHN P. GALVIN (ed.), *Systematic Theology. Roman Catholic Perspectives*, Minneapolis 2011 (2nd ed.), 131–199, pp. 133–134 and 196.
- 35 *Eun* III GNO II. 39,5–6.

Summary

During the Council of Constantinople in 381, at the instigation of the Emperor Theodosius I, the Council Fathers confirmed the creed that had been adopted by the Council of Nicaea in 325, while adding articles on the Holy Spirit. The honour and adoration which the Father and Son receive are also due to the Spirit.

Bishop Gregory of Nyssa wrote his polemic *Against the Macedonians, the Pneumatomachi* in the context of this council; it is a treatise written in classical Greek that has been little studied hitherto. Gregory in this text makes a counteraccusation against the Pneumatomachi, who had accused him of godlessness on account of his adoration of the Spirit. Gregory demonstrates that the Holy Spirit mediates the salvation that comes to humankind from God through Christ. The life-creating force of the Triadic Divinity, a force made visible in baptism, admits human beings with their faith in, and adoration of Father and Son and Holy Spirit into the dynamic circle of divine glory, of which the Spirit is the personification.

This dissertation consists of three parts and has six chapters.

In the first chapter of *Part 1*, the introduction, I provide an orientation on the life and writings of Gregory, introduce *Adversus Macedonianos*, describe its context and the *status quaestionis*, as well as the research plan and the manuscript tradition. I will argue for a probable dating and for the intended audience: Gregory wrote this treatise shortly after the Council of Constantinople in the context of a task with which the Emperor Theodosius had charged him, to put the whole of the Church in order. Gregory wanted to offer encouragement to the orthodox faithful.

My commentary (*Part 2*) charts the theological structure, as well as the rhetorical organisation that Gregory considered appropriate for this. The composition of the work is determined by the succession in the Trinity, which is reflected in creation and in salvation history: the Son goes out from the Father to humanity and gives men and women the Spirit. Human beings proceed in the opposite direction: coming in the Spirit to the Son, who brings them to the Father. Jesus' anointing during his earthly life at his baptism in the Jordan reflects his eternal anointing within God's immanence, and is the prefiguration of the baptism of Christians, anointed people to whom befall the kingship and the glory, that is: the Spirit.

In the systematic theological synthesis in *Part 3* I describe, on the basis of the key idea of this treatise (the Son is the power of which the Father is the

source, and the Spirit is the spirit), how Gregory, basing himself on Scripture, succeeds in making theology culminate in praise of the Trinity, thus constructing a theology of adoration of the Trinity.

In the *Conclusion*, I show how Gregorius' pneumatology casts light on current Trinitarian theology. As a physician, Gregory contributes therapeutically to extending our view of the Spirit's role in the Trinity's work of salvation.

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